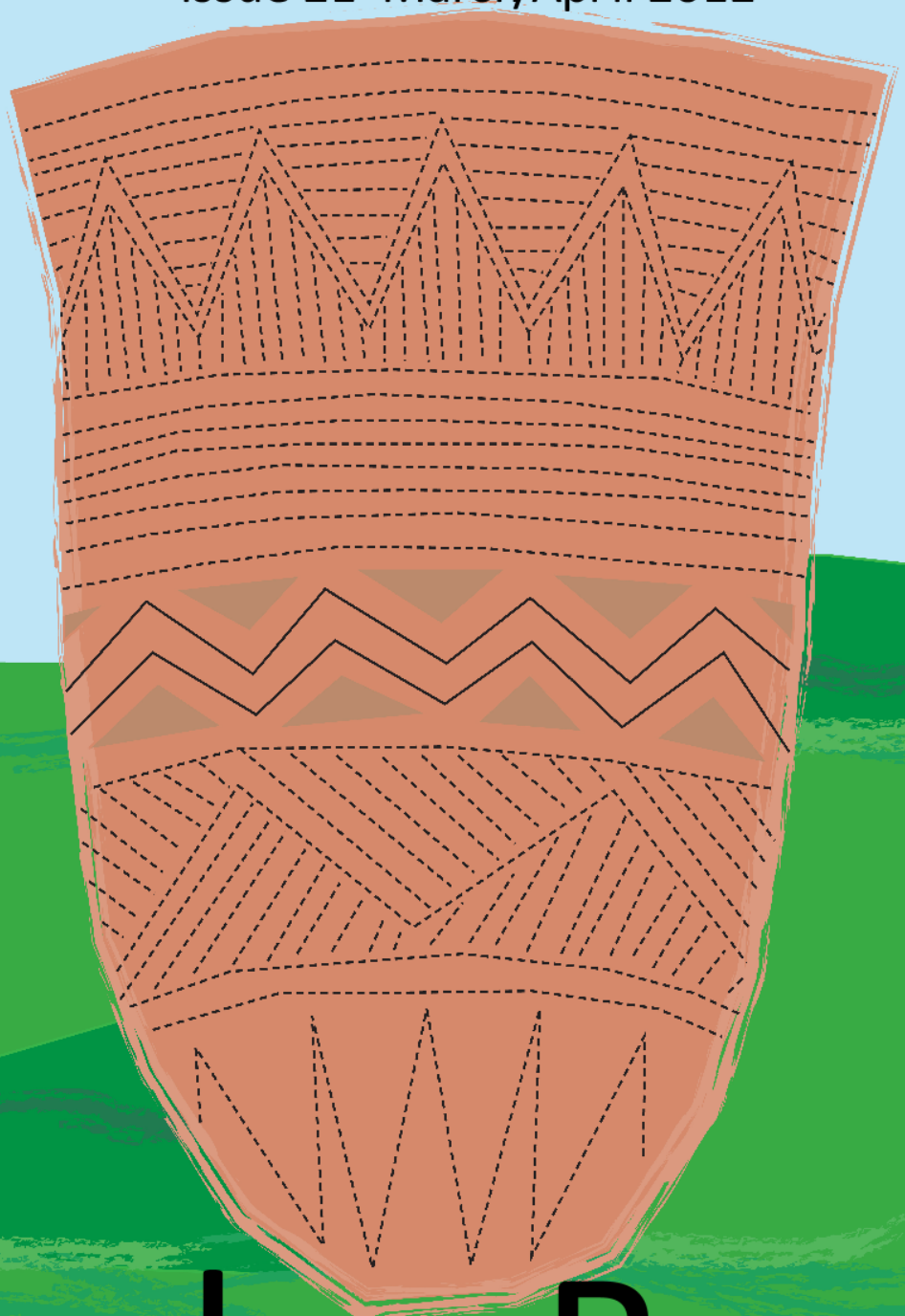
The Student Run Archaeology Journal

The Post Hole

Issue 21 March/April 2012



Beaker Banter

Two articles this issue have links to the Bronze Age Beaker people, a review of a recent conference in Darlington, and an article on Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve. More details inside...

The Post Hole
Issue 21

2012-02-28

Cover image by Izzy Winder.

Contents

1 Editorial

Mark Simpson (mailto:ms788@york.ac.uk)

Welcome to Issue 21 of The Post Hole, the second issue of Spring Term. We have some very interesting articles for you this time, including a review of a recent biological anthropology conference at Teeside University, Darlington campus, by two York Year 3 archaeology students who were there; and more Masters advice from current students. There is also advice on choosing your Year 2 and 3 modules; a piece on local ecology and archaeology resource, Skipwith Common and the first of two articles in Gawthorpe Manor, site of one of last summer's student digs, among other things. So plenty to keep you reading!

In the news this month: friend of the University of York and The Post Hole, TV star Alice Roberts, has been appointed Professor of Public Engagement in Science at Birmingham University. This role will include research and teaching, as well as inspiring people about science in general. We wish her well.

Closer to home, the York 800 events and celebrations are getting underway. This is to mark 800th anniversary of York became a self-governing City in 1212. There is plenty going on over the spring, summer and autumn months, so keep a look out for something that interests you.

I was talking to a current York Masters student a few weeks ago and writing for The Post Hole got mentioned. When I asked the student why they had never contributed to the journal, the reply was that they had never felt they were good enough.

I would like to say to all of you, everyone reading this journal is good enough to contribute to it. In this issue alone we have contributions from Years 2 and 3 of undergraduate, from Masters students and from staff in the modules advice article. Last issue we even had two PhD students giving interviews. There is no barrier preventing anyone from having an article published, except the limits of individual ambition. So go on, send us something...

Finally, I would like to wish an early Happy Easter to everyone. Enjoy the upcoming end of term holidays and I hope you all come back refreshed for the summer term. To the 1st Years, have fun on excavation. 2nd Years, enjoy your Team Projects, they can be fun! To the 3rd Years and Masters students, good luck with the different stages of your respective dissertations and in general, enjoy being here at York and King's Manor.

Take care

Mark

2 North East Biological Anthropology Research Network Conference 2012

Jacqui Mellows (mailto:submissions@theposthole.org) , Rachelle Martyn

On Monday 30th January, we and a group of York bioarchaeologists travelled up to Darlington to the North East Biological Anthropology Research Network conference at Teesside University. It became apparent at the train station that, despite the number of BSc, MSc and PhD's we held between us, none of us actually knew the way to the university. Under the circumstances we all turned to the obvious solution: iPhones. All had, however, conveniently decided to refuse their services thus we set off on our journey with somewhat hazy directions. After a rousing walk through the salubrious areas of Darlington, we were warmly welcomed with tea and coffee, and introduced to the other speakers and attendees of the conference which included a number of fellow academics and students from Durham and Teesside Universities. Dr Tim Thompson of Teesside University gave an opening talk, welcoming us all to this one day meeting exclusively for archaeological scientists in the North East. The aim of the conference was to share new and innovative research; and highlight the global reach of research undertaken by this North East group; whose work spans three universities and countless regions across the globe.

The first talk was by Dr Becky Gowland of Durham University on the morbidity and malaria in the Anglo-Saxon marshes. She began with a background of *Plasmodium vivax* in the UK and an explanation of the historic references to malaria-like diseases from the likes of Bald's Leechbook and Chaucer's writings. Her research aimed to use human skeletal remains to find evidence of malaria in Anglo-Saxon England; despite the fact that this particular condition does not often leave evidence of its presence on skeletal material. Gowland used the association between *vivax* and chronic haemolytic anaemia to suggest that there would be a prevalence of *cribra orbitalia* in areas where malaria was endemic, i.e. the marshlands. The study encompassed forty-six sites across twenty-seven counties, and analysed the remains of 5,802 skeletons. The findings showed that *cribra orbitalia* was more common in the low marshlands, rather than urban environments. The topographical, geological and historical evidence studied from the areas indicating high *cribra orbitalia* prevalence presented convincing support of endemic malaria in specific lowland environments in Anglo-Saxon England (Gowland, 2012).

Next, Professor Matthew Collins of the University of York, stepping in for Dr. Oliver Craig, gave an incredible talk on the studies of palaeodiet, starch grain and calculus analysis, and tracing the movements of populations through gut bacteria. He highlighted the many avenues of analysis currently available to the study of palaeodiet including skeletal osteology, stable isotopes, archaeozoology and archaeobotany to name a few. He emphasised, however, that this is but the beginning; new and innovative techniques are beginning to revolutionise our ideas about palaeodietary analysis. The first of these techniques is starch grain analysis. Matthew admitted his initial trepidation in using starch analysis for, if the cellulose structure in wood breaks down so readily, how can that in starch, which is much weaker, survive? The answer came from considering environment. Above 80°C, the glucose units in starch easily hydrate and are very accessible

to enzyme digestion (relative to their chain structure). Once water infiltrates the starch structure, enzymes have access and begin to break the starch down at a fairly constant rate. Below 80°C, however, the granules are much harder to infiltrate and thus to hydrate and gelatinise. Preserved starch grains, often found as residues on pottery and in dental calculus, are a new and exciting way of ascertaining past diet (Collins, 2012).

In conjunction with this, Matthew also stressed the importance of calculus. Not merely a home for starch grains, it also contains a wealth of biomolecular markers which all represent components of ancient diet. Bacterial DNA and gut flora all flourish in the nourishing, warm environment of our mouths. Their residue, like starch, can also be analysed. *Helicobacter Pylori*, a stomach bacteria associated with stomach ulcers, has been subjected to an innovative study using proteomics and DNA analysis; tracking its development and spread within past populations, allowing experts to infer geographic and migratory pathways of movement. Matthew presented a versatile and engaging overview of several of the most recent and exciting innovations in bioarchaeological analysis. There is no denying we all finished the talk feeling somewhat more intimate with the ecology of our mouths! (Collins, 2012)

After a coffee break, Dr. Kieran McNulty of the University of Minnesota, currently a Leverhulme fellow of Durham University, discussed his on-going research at Rusinga Island. He outlined the vast amount of fossilised hominids, dating 18-20ma, found on the island due to the deep sediments created by the frequently erupting volcano less than 1km away. Previous research from the 1940s and 1950s collated approximately eighty-five species of mammal. More recently there have been around 700 new fossil species discovered, including fifty new primate species, highlighting the importance of this island for the study of the Miocene and human evolution. McNulty touched upon a new area of Rusinga Island, R3, where the project has been surveying a palaeosol. Experts have identified a fossilised interconnecting root system in the short stratigraphy, along with fossil trees dating 18ma. At least four species of *Dendropithecus* have been identified around the trees, showing catarrhines were living in forest areas. This exciting research area is giving a huge insight into very early hominids and their environment during the Miocene, including the remarkable fact that both flora and fauna were able to survive the harsh volcanic conditions nearby (McNulty, 2012).

This was followed by the University of York's Professor Michael Hofreiter who presented an overview of his recent research paper; written with Professor Terry O'Connor of the University of York, and others, on the domestication of horses and how this can be seen through the genetic phenotype of colour. He highlighted how domestic horse species show more variation from human selective breeding programmes, thus we should be able to see the beginnings of domestication with a change in phenotype variation. Pleistocene horses are a very uniform bay species, but by 5,000 years ago they became much more varied with bay, black, grey and white species. However, spotted horses were being depicted in Pleistocene cave paintings 25,000 years ago, suggesting phenotype variation pre-domestication. Hofreiter explained that despite the large variation of contemporary horse phenotypes, all are identical in their Y-chromosome and this was not lost in early horse domestication. Wild mares were perhaps easier to domesticate and this could be what caused the diversity in horse species when added to the breeding pool (Hofreiter, 2012).

A short panel session chaired by Dr. Gillian Taylor of Teesside University allowed the audience to put their questions to the first four speakers before breaking for lunch. Here we had the opportunity to mingle with other students and academics.

The afternoon session resumed with Teesside PhD student Claudia Garrido-Varas talking about her research in bilateral asymmetry and sexual dimorphism, and how this is used to pair up bones in the context of mass graves. She gave an example of how she had done this using the humerus in a modern Chilean population. The humerus is diverse and can be used to age, sex and determine the stature in individuals. Garrido-Varas explained how she measured the maximum length, the vertical diameter of the head and the width of the distal end which show differences between males and females and are all population specific. The lengths surprisingly showed the right side was always slightly longer than the left, but it would be hard to match pairs based on this alone. Instead, she used geometric morphometrics to scale and find the best fit for bone shapes. Procrustes superimposition determined if the bones were roughly the same shape and belonged to the same individual (Garrido-Varas, 2012).

Dr. Janet Montgomery of Durham University discussed her research as part of the Beaker People Project, with an isotopic study of burials in Britain. Her aim was "to reassess the dates, osteology, diet and mobility of 250 burials in Britain and to interpret the context of current theory and material culture". The 250 individuals were investigated using strontium (Sr) and oxygen (O) isotopes on the 2nd molar to assess mobility, and carbon (C), nitrogen (N) and sulphur (S) on root dentine to assess diet. However, Montgomery explains how her results were extremely un-diagnostic. The Sr results were mostly <0.710 which is expected for any geological location in the UK. Likewise, the C and N values were all in a tight cluster suggesting a very uniform diet across the UK. The O results appeared to be normally distributed with a very large range. One interesting point was when the burials were plotted onto a geological map. Montgomery was quite surprised to find that most of the burials appeared to be on the border of the same two types of geology. Montgomery's research highlighted the uses of isotopic analysis but how it can also be very un-diagnostic. The Sr results, for example, could suggest an individual originated from a band of geology in Scandinavia, but very similar results will also put that person in an area of the UK (Montgomery, 2012).

The final talk was by Durham University PhD student Julie Peacock whose research is aiming to prove through British skeletal remains the presence of disability and traumatic brain injury after sustaining head injury. Understandably not every head wound would result in a brain injury, but her ongoing research is looking at individuals from London, Norwich and York to try and determine secondary symptoms, such as disabilities and co-morbidity, that might be a result of a previous head wound and subsequent brain injury. These might appear as defects on the C3 and C4 vertebrae, osteophytes on the T4-T8 vertebrae and scoliosis associated with gait problems (Peacock, 2012).

The day was rounded up with a second panel also chaired by Dr. Gillian Taylor to put questions to the final three speakers, followed by some closing words from Dr. Tim Thompson. The conference was well structured and presented a wide range of exciting and interesting research fields. It was a great opportunity to learn first-hand about the new areas of bioarchaeological

research currently being undertaken in the field; and was in general an enjoyable and academically stimulating day.

Bibliography

- Collins, M. (2012). *Studies of palaeodiet, starch grain and calculus analysis.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- Garrido-Varas, C. (2012). *The humerus, bilateral asymmetry and sexual dimorphism in a modern Chilean population.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- Gowland, B. (2012). *Morbidity and malaria in the Anglo-Saxon marshes.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- Hofreiter, M. (2012). *Of spotted horses and clonal stallions.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- McNulty, K. P. (2012). *Island of the apes: Rusinga Island and the evolution of our earliest ape ancestors.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- Montgomery, J. (2012). *The Beaker People Project.* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.
- Peacock, J. (2012). *Disability and traumatic brain injury in Britain: AD1066 – AD1600* [Lecture to Moving Goalposts: Around the World] Teeside University, Darlington Campus. 30 January 2012.

3 Skipwith Common National Nature Reserve – A Journey Through Time

Mark Simpson (mailto:ms788@york.ac.uk)

For those unfamiliar with the area, Skipwith Common is an area in North Yorkshire comprising 274 hectares of mixed woodland, lowland heath and some wetland regions. The Common is designated as a National Nature Reserve as it represents one of the best examples of a lowland wet and dry heath landscape in northern England with a wealth of special wildlife, geology and history all of which can be enjoyed by the public. This is largely uncultivated land, though down the centuries and even millennia, mankind has used the resources offered by the Common to our own advantage.

Figure 1 – Fly Agaric fungi (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson)

I first became involved with Skipwith Common almost four years ago. Soon after obtaining my archaeology A Level from Selby College night school in 2007, I spotted an advert in the local newspaper, just a couple of column inches, asking for volunteers to come along and help with an archaeological landscape survey. This was being co-ordinated by a local group of like-minded individuals going by the collective name of the Friends of Skipwith Common. Having a spare holiday day, I booked the time off work and went along. The rest, as they say, is history.

I met a number of people I now consider close friends (no pun intended) and learned quite a bit about landscape survey from the archaeological expert present, Jamie Quartermaine. As an experienced project manager with commercial group Oxford Archaeology North, he was able to teach the group over

the following two years a number of survey techniques as we discovered more about humanity's involvement with this special landscape.

The Friends group was formed in 2003 as a loose association of people who regularly used Skipwith Common and wanted to help preserve its ecology and archaeology. The Common is owned by Escrick Park Estate and managed by them in partnership with Natural England. The Friends, while an independent group, are Natural England volunteers who help with task days such as mending fences, building walkways and rounding up sheep. Yes, really, rounding up sheep!

After less than a year as a member of the Friends, I was appointed as Archaeology Liaison, keeping those members with an interest in the subject up to date with events on the Common and talking to archaeologists about those events. Within six months I had been invited to join the committee, a position I still hold today.

The Common is a rich ecological resource as well as having well preserved archaeology. Hebridean sheep and longhorn cattle roam freely in the spring, summer and autumn months, while six Exmoor ponies remain on the Common at all times. Last October's 'fungal foray' guided walk attracted a record seventy-five people, while the area is also home to orchids, marsh gentian flowers and wild deer.

Figure 2 – Replica Bronze Age Beaker (left) and Bronze Age burial mound being surveyed (right) (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson)

But there is also a lot of archaeology hidden among the trees and heath land. The Common is particularly rich in Bronze Age burial mounds, with a cluster of them in an area at the north western end called the Danes Hills. The name came about from antiquarians, who believed the burial mounds were constructed by the Vikings burying their dead after the Battle of Stamford Bridge before

returning home a beaten force from their mooring point at the nearby village of Riccall. However, some of these mounds were dug up in the Victorian era and turned up crouched interments and Beaker pottery, firmly placing them in the Bronze Age.

Aside from these, there are many more barrows dotted across the Common. Roughly twenty metres across and circular with a single outer ditch, these are also interpreted as Bronze Age. In early 2009, a survey group led by Jamie Quartermaine actually discovered a 'new' barrow, one that had not been previously mapped; a significant discovery for a local group of enthusiasts! (Blythe & Quartermaine, 2009).

During the landscape survey of recent years a number of territorial bank and ditch features, also interpreted as Bronze Age, were discovered. These consist of three or four closely parallel earthen banks with ditches between which, despite being fairly shallow today, would once have been much higher, deeper and more impressive. Thousands of years of steady erosion have worn them down to a mere shadow of their former selves. One such system ran from north to south right across the centre of the Common and has been traced through crop marks in the surrounding fields to a total length of over two kilometres (Blythe & Quartermaine, 2008 & 2009).

However, the Common does not just play host to Bronze Age features. There is also what has been interpreted as an Iron Age enclosure, square shaped and with what again would once have been a deep ditch around it. This is further defended by more bank and ditch systems around the outside and likely would have had a high wooden stockade style fence around the edge 2,000 plus years ago. Given the relatively small area it covers, this would appear to have been a defended enclosure where the scattered community could have retreated to with their valuable livestock when other tribes tried to raid their land. The fields to the north of this feature, which sits at the edge of the Common, show many crop marks associated with round houses, other enclosures of similar size and track ways, all of potentially Iron Age date, making what could well have been the first village at Skipwith (Blythe & Quartermaine, 2008).

Moving forward in time, another part of the edge of the Common holds the imprint of ridge and furrow ploughing, which could date anywhere between Saxon and late medieval. The main reason that the Common has remained uncultivated is because it makes for poor farmland. This was obviously an attempt to bring part of it under the plough, but most likely failed and the land was returned to the Common, still bearing the distinctive broad ridges and deep furrows. Like the banks, ditches and barrows, these too have eroded over time, but being 'newer' than the other features they stand out better (Blythe & Quartermaine, 2009).

I mentioned earlier how mankind has exploited the natural resources of the Common over time. This can be seen in the remains of 'peat stacks', which the village's post-medieval inhabitants would have made from cutting turves to construct a low platform on which to place peat for drying after it was cut. The Common provides good sources of both peat and natural sand; the latter in many places is barely an inch below the surface of the soil. Sand extraction pits are scattered around the edges of the area, where it would have been easier to get transportation to remove it. Between the sections where peat and sand are common is a place called the Line Ponds. It has been suggested that this is a flax retting area, with constructed ponds being used in conjunction with

sluices to first soak the flax, then to provide a 'flush' of clean water to 'ret' the raw material from the waste. This process was used as the first stage in making linen, hence the name Line Ponds (Blythe & Quartermaine, 2008 & 2009).

The biggest impact on the Common by man however, certainly in recent times, came during World War II. As a large piece of 'spare' land, Skipwith, the adjoining Riccall Common and the fields surrounding them were the site in 1942 for the building of RAF Riccall, a training base for aircrew to learn how to fly four engined Handley Page Halifax bombers. There were thirty-two aircraft and almost a thousand men stationed there for three years until the war ended in 1945 and the base was subsequently decommissioned. It remained in RAF hands as a storage facility until 1960, when the final off-Common parts were sold (Riccall Local History Group, 2004).

Figure 3 – Air raid shelter (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson)

Despite the fact that around 9%of the airbase has now disappeared under fields around the Common, many features still survive from this time. These include bomb and fuse testing buildings, air raid shelters, the outdoor bomb storage areas (now home to some specialist wildlife such as Grass Snakes and Lizards) and some of the taxiways and 'pans', where aircraft would be tied down so they would not be flipped over by strong winds. The road system that runs across the Common is a remainder of the air base, while the last segment of one of the runways is a main car park.

Skipwith Common was designated a National Nature Reserve in late 2009, though it was already a Site of Special Scientific Interest before this. A memorial was raised in 2010 and dedicated to the members of the aircrew of RAF Riccall who lost their lives in accidents during its three years of operation. In 2011 the Friends and Natural England created three way-marked paths across the

landscape, so that walkers can enjoy the Common at any time by downloading a prepared walk from the Internet.

Escrick Park Estate, Natural England and the Friends of Skipwith Common continue to work towards improving the experience of the general visiting public. A number of schemes are in the works for 2012 including replacing an awkward stile with an improved kissing gate, completing signage for the way-marked paths and the restoration of one air raid shelter to allow visitors to discover the heritage of the site whilst converting another into a bat hibernaculum (a home for some of the Common's bat population).

I shall always be grateful for the enthusiasm of the Friends and their interest in Skipwith Common, and also for the permissions of Escrick Park Estate and support of Natural England, which helped spark my own passion for archaeology after taking the A Level. This in turn led to me discovering other local groups, attending digs during weekends and holiday days and ultimately to giving up work and coming to university to obtain a degree (and hopefully a Masters).

For more information on Skipwith Common visit the Escrick Park Estate website `http://www.escrick.com/`, Natural England's Skipwith Common page `http://tinyurl.com/7f7hjlc` and the Friends `http://tinyurl.com/7yt6sz9`

Bibliography

- Blythe, K. & Quartermaine, J. (2008). *Skipwith Common, North Yorkshire: Outline Landscape Survey.* Lancaster: Oxford Archaeology North.
- Blythe, K. & Quartermaine, J. (2009). *Skipwith Common, North Yorkshire: Archaeological Landscape Survey.* Lancaster: Oxford Archaeology North.
- Riccall Local History Group (2004). *Riccall in World War II 1939-1945: Life in a Yorkshire rural community.* Riccall: Riccall Local History Group.

4 Making Your Mind Up: Module Option Advice from Staff and Current Students

David Altoft

Still struggling to decide which module options to apply for, or simply interested to find out what people are doing on other courses? This is something that many first and second year students experience every spring term. Below is a review of all of the options on offer for next year from many of the staff leading them and current students taking them, in the hope that you will be able find the ones that interest you the most. The decisions you will have to make will be quite important ones so it is advisable that you do not rush into them. One of the great things about archaeology is that the range of fields you decide to pursue can be as narrow or as broad as you wish; which although making any decision more difficult, can also help keep your degree highly enjoyable and refreshing.

Unfortunately, Jon Finch is currently away on sabbatical and so we are not able to share any information about his new Assessed Seminar option, 'The Modern Landscape'. If you are interested to learn more about it, or indeed any of the options, the 'Choosing Options' page, accessible from the 'Undergraduate Modules' page on the intranet contains much more detailed information (the URL is at the end of this article). Your supervisors and the staff running the options will also be able to provide any information if you require it. All that remains to be said is... if any of the third year Assessed Seminar options do not currently guarantee cake, they will do soon!

World Archaeology

Early Medieval Towns – Soren Sindbaek and a current student

Urbanism is a great divide in the history of humanity, second only, perhaps, to the adoption of agriculture. It is not a one-off event, but a process that has kept emerging in new places and in new forms ever since the Neolithic. Early medieval towns are a crucial and surprising case. European historical tradition has identified urbanism with Graeco-Roman walled cities or medieval fortress towns. By this yardstick the early medieval period, with almost no towns of this form, has come to be seen as a devolution, a crisis, a bad mistake, which was luckily overcome. But archaeology has introduced a new storyline. Early medieval people developed different models of complex societies – a wealth of cultural diversity, which is nowhere more apparent than in their towns. Early medieval urban sites are some of the richest and most intriguing archaeological sites of the period, an extraordinary record of artefacts, monuments or biofacts, and hubs of cultural innovation and exchange, identities and social roles.

My idea with the course on 'Early Medieval Towns' is to use urban sites and excavations as a way of introducing early medieval archaeology more generally, and also to illustrate contrasts, common themes, and surprising convergences across the old world. The course is mainly focussed on Europe and the Near East, but strikes off on occasion into Africa, India, and China. Almost by default, it also rehearses a good chunk of archaeological theory and methods – not least, of course, as relates to urbanism. It is a demanding option in some

ways, but it can give you new perspectives on archaeology, and a solid steer on the early middle ages.

"I took 'Early Medieval Towns' taught by Soren, and the whole thing was really interesting. The module is perfect for someone wanting to study archaeology that is away from the norm. Unlike most other options, its focus is away from England and more on Asia Minor, India, China and parts of Europe, which I found a refreshing change. The course is challenging – LOTS of reading for lectures and the essay! It also has some heavy 'theory' at points; for instance, the theory of towns and town planning – although Soren did try and make it a bit easier. I would definitely recommend this option as I cannot stress enough how engaging it was, especially to Historical Archaeologists."

The Emergence of Mediterranean Civilisations – Kevin Walsh and a current student

For most people who have not studied archaeology, the Mediterranean is the one region that comes to mind as the centre of the great early civilisations. This module is an opportunity to study the emergence of Mediterranean societies. As a survey module, we cover the entire Mediterranean, from the Palaeolithic to the end of the Roman Period. This module considers the development of the earliest complex agricultural societies, followed by the great Bronze Age cultures of the Minoans and the Mycenaeans just to name two. As we move into the Iron Age, we consider the emergence of the Etruscans, the Phoenicians, and other groups then dominated much of the region. A number of themes run through the module, in particular, we assess the ways in which these different groups developed their economies, and their religious and ideological systems. Just as importantly, we will also assess how these peoples related to, and engaged with the incredible range of natural environments that characterise the Mediterranean. One reason for doing this module is that if you ever go on holiday to the Mediterranean, you will be able to look beyond the sun, sea, and sand, and engage with the rich range of sites and cultures that made the Mediterranean what it is today. Such knowledge might even help those who are interested in a career in tourism...

"I would recommend this course to anyone who is interested in learning about the huge number of ways in which the unique natural environment of the Mediterranean was largely responsible for the development of unique cultures, from the Palaeolithic to the Roman Era, and still today. Kevin was excellent at demonstrating how interconnectedness of different populations and environments around the Mediterranean encouraged major developments in society, from the dispersal of modern humans out from Africa in the Palaeolithic, to the innovation and spread of agricultural practices in the Neolithic, to the Roman's 'stamp' of control over the landscape with field systems and increasingly complex and diverse towns. Everything imaginable about the prehistoric and classical Mediterranean is succinctly covered and interrelated – Minoan palaces, Maltese temples, 'Ain Ghazal statues, southern French cave art, and much more. It was particularly useful having Kevin's experience of survey work in the southern French Alps for covering that region in addition to the large number of sites and other examples that were used for other parts of the Mediterranean."

Historical Archaeology and the Modern World – James Symonds

In this module we will consider the historical archaeology of the modern world (AD1500 to present) through the study of material culture, buildings, and landscapes. The module will focus upon developments in global 'modern-world' archaeology and will explore the materiality of European colonization, and responses by indigenous peoples within the over-arching grand narratives of capitalism, economic improvement, and consumerism. The theories and research methods employed by international historical archaeologists will be examined in a series of case studies from the UK, North America, South Africa, and Australasia, and we will consider how textual and artefactual evidence can be combined to recover evidence of subaltern lives, and how historical archaeology may be regarded as a form of political action that informs contemporary debates on issues of race, class, gender, and poverty.

Mummification – Jo Fletcher

Figure 1 – Image copyright J. Fletcher/University of York Mummy Research Group

This course looks at mummification in its widest sense, focussing on human remains retaining their soft tissue by either natural means or artificial preservation. And although usually associated with ancient Egypt, the course covers mummies discovered in environments ranging from dry deserts to rain forests, mountain ranges to peat bogs over the last 8,000 years. Within the lecture framework will be discussion of the work undertaken by the university's Mummy Research Group based at BioArch, the ethics surrounding the acquisition and display of human remains, and our current project involving the mummification of a human body donor (above).

NB: Any students considering this option must be aware that a significant amount of reading is required.

Practical Skills and Team Project options

Animal Bones – Terry O'Connor and a current student

This bony and rather grubby module introduces the study of the copious animal bones that we dig up from archaeological deposits. Its aim is to show what sort of information we can recover from old bones, and at least some of the practical techniques involved, so that you can read the academic literature on this subject with a fair critical understanding of what they are going on about. The module is delivered as three seminars and five practical sessions, and assessed by a highly entertaining practical exam at the end. Apart from giving you an insight into one of the most abundant of archaeological 'finds', the module enables you to take on a more hands-on dissertation topic.

Like all of the Team Projects, this follows on from the Practical Skills module. In this module, you are divided into (normally) three groups, each of which is set a task to complete. We aim to record, report and explain a small but interesting animal bone assemblage, usually one that has never been studied before. The assemblages are chosen to be within your capacity (assuming you paid attention during the Practical Skills module!), with regular help during the lab sessions and while working up your results. The module is thus a natural follow-on from the Practical Skills module, putting those skills to work, and a valuable exercise in teamwork and time management.

"It was basically one big set of puzzles, and I like puzzles."

Artefacts – Steve Ashby

The Artefacts class is a great choice for anyone who fancies getting their hands on real artefacts, and learning how to record and interpret them. We work with material from the Yorkshire Museum, so you get to experience a real mixture of the bread-and-butter of the finds specialist, and some real treats as well. We cover everything from Palaeolithic hand axes to post-medieval coins, with a lot of objects of bone, stone, pottery and metal along the way. You will probably come in with no specialist finds knowledge at all, but you will go out of it knowing how to recognise some of the key artefact types for a range of time periods, and, more importantly, you will know what to record about them, and why. This will also open your eyes to the problems with a lot of artefact reports, and how we might improve the dissemination of information to researchers and the public. You will build on all this in your team project, when you will get to record and interpret a real artefact collection from the museum, with the best reports actually being used by the museum in their displays and other materials. So, if you fancy working in a museum, for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, or in a finds unit (either as a finds specialist or a digging archaeologist), then this is a great option. If you are thinking of looking at artefacts for your dissertation, it is also an ideal choice. And if you have no intention of staying in archaeology after you leave, it is still a lot of fun, you will be able to make your housemates jealous with the things you got to look at, and you will learn the art of recording complex information in a consistent, transparent, and reproducible manner, which is a vital transferrable skill.

NB: This module will be taught by Stephanie Wynne-Jones in 2012-13

Biomolecular Archaeology – Matthew Collins and a current student

The course is a pre-requisite for anyone wishing to conduct a laboratory based project in S-Block. The course introduces you to good laboratory practice and laboratory health and safety. You will learn to conduct collagen isotope analysis and ZooMS (peptide mass spectrometry) of medieval bone.

> In 'Biomolecular Archaeology' you will learn how to work in a lab and carry out some common analytical techniques on bone. I have really enjoyed this module as doing practical work in the lab has helped make the subject much more 'real' and easier to understand. The lecturers are very good at explaining how to do things in the lab and provide some useful advice on how to write a good critique of an archaeological science article, which is the formative and summative assessment for this module. For the course it is helpful to have a bit of knowledge of chemistry even though you are brought up to scratch with lectures.
> In the summer term you get to test what you have learnt in the lab by carrying out an isotope analysis of human and animal bones in teams and producing a report on the results, serving as an excellent preparation for anyone planning to do a lab-based dissertation. I would highly recommend Biomolecular Archaeology not only to bioarchaeology students but to anyone interested in how the field actually works and how it can contribute to archaeological study of the past.

Buildings History – Kate Giles and a current student

'Buildings History' is all about getting students familiar within finding and using historical (archive) sources to study historic buildings. The module is based partly at KM and partly at the Borthwick Institute for Archives, which is attached to the JBM library. We alternate sessions at King's Manor, where we have a brief presentation on types of sources for studying buildings, followed by an analysis of a range of monographs and sites reports for the ways in which they have used historical sources in the analysis of buildings. This is designed to train students in the skills of the report critique, which is the formative and part of the summative assessment. Each KM session ends with an online quiz, full of useful hotlinks to online resources.

At the Borthwick we spend our time looking at a range of primary sources, from medieval wills to church Faculties, 19th and 20th century architects' plans, maps and diaries, photographs and sketchbooks relating to the type of building we have discussed the previous week. These sessions include churches, houses, industrial and institutional buildings. This is excellent practice for the second part of the summative assessment, which is a kind of slide test in KM, where students are given copies of sources to analyse with a set rubric of questions, just as they have done in the Borthwick Sessions. These archive sessions are great fun, with lots of discussion and original analysis generated by the students themselves.

This module feeds into the Year 2 Buildings History Team Project, where a set of archives studied in class, or a similar collection at the Borthwick is chosen as the focus for the team project. Existing examples from last year include a rather

splendid Edwardian house in Filey by the architect Walter Brieley, a study of early hospital buildings, including the Purey Cust (recently made famous by ITV in Eternal Law!) and an analysis of preparation of factory buildings for air raids in WW2. We have regular weekly meetings with each group in the first four weeks of term, to help with the analysis and structure of the report. Students then complete the report together for the summative deadline. The marking criteria are decided by the group and last year seemed to work really well.

Several of last year's students went on to take my third year Historic Interiors course (running again in 2013/14) and are now applying for MAs with us in buildings archaeology.

"For anyone with even a passing interest in buildings, this is a fascinating module choice. The Team Project aspect is a challenging but rewarding experience and you will learn much from it, not only about yourself but also your fellow team members."

Conservation and Planning – Sophie Norton

Conservation and Planning will give students a practical insight into the management of heritage assets at a local level. We will discuss the roles of DCMS, English Heritage and the Local Planning Authority and think about the need for compromise in conservation. We will also look at the documentation that both the Local Planning Authority and the site owner need to produce so that informed and positive conservation decisions are made. Site visits to current development sites around York supplement the classroom based sessions so that we can see the tools we have discussed being put into action. The module culminates in a team project, where students have the opportunity to produce a professional document that could guide future development.

Environmental Archaeology – Kevin Walsh and Allan Hall

As with all of the group practical modules, the underlying aim is to develop your ability to collaborate on a particular project; a skill that is essential in any future career. In the Environmental Archaeology module, you will first consider the rationale and broader aims of environmental research in Archaeology. This is followed by a series of hands-on sessions where you are taught key tests and analyses that allow us to characterise soils, and then archaeobotanical remains. Whilst specifically useful in archaeology, the study of these different forms of environmental evidence have a relevance for a number of related fields of study; from Physical Geography to Botany, and the wider field of Environmental Studies. Even if you just have a desire to learn more about the "natural world", this module can inform such an interest. The group project element in the summer term is an opportunity for you to collaborate with one another and execute all of the tests and analyses learnt during the spring term on a series of samples from archaeological sites. This component is not merely about the "appliance of science", but an experience in carrying out collaborative research, a skill that is fundamental not just in the academic world, but in many walks of life.

Heritage – Cath Neal and a current student

In the Practical Heritage course we will be looking at the relationship between archaeology and heritage by visiting some museums and heritage sites in York. We will consider the way that sites try and appeal to a variety of audiences, how successful this is, and the way that they market themselves. Part of the challenge of the course is to take a very practical visit experience and consider it in relation to the wider academic reading. We enjoy getting out and about and even manage to role play a Viking family at the museum, all in the name of participative study! The assessments take the form of critiques of sites or websites and the follow- on module is Team Heritage where the groups write an Audience Development Plan for a museum in York. You should really take this module because we get out and about, and have some good discussions about the wider public dimension of archaeology.

Figure 2 – Students doing research for their Heritage Team Project last year (Image Copyright – Gill Savage)

"A well structured module with a good balance of both document/web-based study and practical research combined with interesting individual seminar presentations. We visited several heritage places in the city (Castle Museum, Yorkshire Museum, Jorvik and Clifford's Tower) to look at their effectiveness as visitor attractions. Working together as a team to produce a report was a particularly rewarding, and enjoyable experience."

Human Bones – Malin Holst and a current student

The Human Bones Practicals and Team Projects in the second year provide the unique chance to work with actual human remains and gain the opportunity to learn about anatomy, how the skeleton develops and changes with age, the effects of the environment on the human body and about different diseases. Although this is classed as a science subject, the topic is accessible to everyone. Those of you who will stay in archaeology will be confronted by human remains sooner or later and it is therefore fundamental to have some experience with human remains. However, the knowledge you gain in the course can also be useful for many other professions.

"Human Bones is a brilliant practical module that I would highly recommend to anyone, even those who are embarking upon a BA in Archaeology or Historical Archaeology. I personally felt that I learnt a substantial amount, and was able to put theory into practice. It truly is amazing how much information can be retrieved from human remains, from age, sex and stature of an individual to diseases that may have affected them during their lifetime, to name but a few examples. Overall, a highly recommended module with excellent teaching, you will not be disappointed."

Professional and Management Skills – Penny Spikins

Interested in a career involving management in commercial archaeology or other spheres? Then this course may be just right for you! We develop key skills in understanding management concepts, writing project designs, dealing with finances and health and safety, and other professional issues within archaeology and beyond. The course involves a series of lectures and practical sessions which include 'interviews' with key figures who have managed large archaeological projects or teams, as well as tutorials and group and individual tasks. In the team project you have an opportunity to work in a 'real' situation developing project designs or funding bids such as with community groups. This course is unique within Britain in giving you this opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding to set you in good stead in future work.

Special Topics

Ancient DNA – Michelle Mundee

The study of ancient DNA (aDNA) is rapidly becoming one of the most exciting areas of scientific enquiry in archaeology! This special topic in ancient DNA aims to give you an idea of the background and development of aDNA techniques from their early beginnings, through the dark days to the new, sophisticated technologies available to us today. The module aims to assess how studies of aDNA have impacted our understanding of past societies and contributed to big archaeological questions such as human evolution, domestication of plants and animals and palaeopathology, while discussing some of the pitfalls that the field has encountered and, most importantly, what potential studies of aDNA have for archaeology in the future – and the future is bright!

Archaeology of Colonialism (Paul Lane) -a current student

"I really enjoyed the Archaeology of Colonialism; it gave me a different perspective on colonialism, as there is more to the debate then just coloniser versus colonised, and how archaeology can be utilised in colonialism. The module is broad but not too broad as it looks at different historical periods and places and also themes you might not originally consider to be part of the colonisation debate (colonisation of consciousness). Dr. Lane is fantastic and talks about his own archaeological research which gives the course depth and puts into perspective the archaeological case studies. This module engages in lively debate and if you want a reconsideration of colonialism then the Archaeology of Colonialism is the module for you."

Battlefield Archaeology (Tim Sutherland) – a current student

"Battlefields is an interesting module that looks at a mixture of different disciplines; bone analysis, landscape archaeology, geophysical survey, among others. Tim Sutherland, the module leader, is hugely enthusiastic and knowledgeable about his subject, which holds the interest of the student through lectures and seminars."

Human Evolution – Terry O'Connor and a current student

What are we; where have we come from; what is so special about having a chin; what were hand axes for anyway? These and many other fundamental questions about being us are explored in this module. We begin back in the mists of the Miocene, before there actually was anything recognisably human, and follow the story of our clade all the way forward to the present day, with the emphasis very much on quality and quantity of evidence. After a couple of introductory lectures, the module takes one topic at a time in roughly chronological order, giving each a lecture and a student-led seminar. The module is team-taught, with contributions from colleagues in the Hull-York Medical School who are world-renowned specialists in human evolutionary anatomy.

"I was certain from the moment I saw the module options that the Human Evolution Special Topic was going to be for me, and having now completed it I know it was definitely the right choice. As a BSc student who had taken modules in Human Bones the year before, I found the study of human evolution extremely rewarding. The module content is both challenging and intellectually stimulating and helps you to really demonstrate what you have learned over the course of your degree. The staff are amazing and despite how much work they have on themselves, are always willing to talk to you about anything that is on your mind. To anyone considering making this one of their choices, I heartily encourage you to do so."

Neolithic and Bronze-Age Britain – Mark Edmonds

This module follows a sequence from the end of the Mesolithic to the end of the Bronze Age. It explores the changing character of society between the later fifth and later second millennia BC. Using the evidence of landscape, architecture and artefacts, the course tracks important changes in the material conditions of people's lives; domestication, the appearance of monuments and

technological transformations such as metalworking. It also explores changes in the relationship between the living and the dead, in people's perceptions of the world around them and in the social dimensions of material culture. Go on... You know you want to...

Roman Landscapes – Steve Roskams and a current student

Many approaches to the Roman World study particular aspects of Antiquity, especially matters such as towns and architecture, and then mostly in terms of its upper echelons in isolation from other levels of society. This option aims to avoid this trap by focusing instead on the diverse ways in which the Empire impacted on different landscapes in order to support itself. We will look at how landscapes were controlled and exploited and, more generally, at the relationship between environment and culture. Lectures will introduce different interpretative frameworks and methodologies in this sphere, and seminars will be used to discuss particular themes such as water, oil and food in detail.

Taking things forward in this way necessarily requires that we consider a wide range of places; from North Africa in the south, to Britain in the north, and from Spain in the west, to Syria in the east. It also needs a wide chronology in order to understand the pre-Roman contexts on which the Empire impinged and the post-Roman trajectories which flowed from it. Finally, to ensure that you have contact with a variety of perspectives, the course incorporates members of staff who have researched some very different regions and from different points of view – Helen Goodchild, Cath Neal, David Roberts and Kevin Walsh. If you are interested in Rome, but turned off by the traditional ways in which it has been studied, this may be an opportunity for you to expose yourself to a range of alternative approaches.

> If there is anyone who has a fascination with or is thinking of doing a Roman based dissertation then Roman Landscapes is the module for you. Throughout the module you will develop a greater understanding of how the Empire functioned and get the opportunity to explore some less well known provinces such as Syria, Libya and Beirut.
> This module will demonstrate how Rome managed to control and alter the landscapes in its respective provinces and assimilated them into the growing empire but also how despite common opinion, the process of Romanisation was sometimes simply a facade where Rome was not the sole influence on certain provinces.
> You will also learn how early Christianisation of the Empire and some of the key commodities that travelled within it, such as Olive Oil, affected different landscapes. I was particularly excited to study this – not only because it is part of my dissertation – but because it is such an interesting area which you would never get to study otherwise.

Visual Media in Archaeology – Sara Perry

Visual Media in Archaeology aims to explore the application of visual media (photos, maps, illustrations, diagrams, film, TV, digital renderings, museum

displays, temporary and permanent exhibitions, and related 2D and 3D presentations) to the creation and interpretation of the archaeological record. The lectures and seminars will focus on assessment of the widespread visual studies scholarship (both in and beyond archaeology), historical review of the use of visual media by antiquarians and archaeologists from c. the 16th century onwards, and critical analysis of a series of case studies of different visual media in action in various recent archaeological contexts.

We will look at the theory and practice of archaeological visualisation not only from the perspective of public engagement, but in terms of its consequences for academic knowledge-making and the long-term funding and sustenance of the discipline.

This is a provocative topic of study that has relevance for any archaeologistregardless of disciplinary sub-speciality. Visual tools help us to think through our research, articulate our ideas, and communicate with our colleagues and others. They can facilitate or hinder our work. We will interrogate examples of this relationship between images and scientific practice, looking both at historical cases and up-to-the-minute research on new media forms in archaeology.

Assessed Seminars

Animals and Archaeology – Terry O'Connor

One of the remarkable things about human beings is our tendency to develop affiliative relationships with other species. We do not just eat them; we make household companions, deities and symbols out of them. These assessed seminars take a wide range of topics around the general subject of past interrelations between people and other species, including reviews of how some things came into domestication or taming, how the archaeological record may or may not reflect specific activities and processes, and questions about our own interpretation of the zooarchaeological record. Like all the assessed seminar groups, the Animals group become a lively and mutually-supportive forum for exchanging ideas, information and (often) cake.

Debates in Archaeological Science – Matthew Collins and a current student

The course offers students the opportunity to explore how science is transforming archaeology. We are living in strange times when the Gadget Blog 'Engadget' sees fit to report on a genome sequencer. The MinION is a tiny disposable genome sequencer that could sequence 150 million base pairs of DNA, costs less than two radiocarbon dates, and simply plugs into a laptop to gather the data. What do the rapid advances in bioscience technology mean for archaeology? The Assessed Seminar encourages you to consider the way in science is shaping the future of our discipline, and how science has been used and misused in the past.

"Debates is an awesome module because it is wide open. You can pick basically anything as a seminar topic so long as it is remotely science related and there is some kind of controversy. And, to be fair, when is there not controversy in the world of science?! This makes science a great topic for a seminar because there are just so many things to discuss!"

Environmental Archaeoplogy: A Landscape Perspective – Kevin Walsh

This module offers an opportunity for students to think more broadly about human relationships with landscape. Therefore, this option is particularly aimed at anyone with a broader interest in landscape development and human relationships with the environment. Although this is a BSc option, many BA students have taken this in the past and have considered a range of landscapes from around the world, and addressed the wider issue of how cultural and environmental archaeology can inform our interpretations of past understandings of, and engagements with the natural world. The issue of humankind's response to changes in climate is one common theme running through this module, and is particularly important today with the debate surrounding how modern society should respond to climate change. This option is also a useful springboard for those interested in pursuing an MA in landscape archaeology, or for those who think that they might wish to make a "sideways" move into environmental studies.

Medieval Africa – Stephanie Wynne-Jones and a current student

Figure 3 – The 14th Century Great Mosque at Kilwa Kisiwani, Tanzania (Image Copyright – S. Wynne-Jones)

Medieval Africa is a fascinating topic as it allows us to explore some familiar archaeological themes – of power, urbanism, religion and material culture – among societies that challenge some of the expectations built up through studying European archaeology. The course covers roughly the period AD800 – 1500, which was a time of incredible growth in sub-Saharan African civilisations.

At this time, we can chart the emergence of much more complex hierarchical societies across the continent. In particular, though, the period is one of amazing interconnectedness, with links across the continent and with Europe and the Indian Ocean world becoming more intense and visible archaeologically. The assessed seminar format is a great one for exploring this time period, allowing students to run with their own interests, and to get involved in some emergent debates in the archaeology of a region that they probably had little experience of previously.

"Medieval Africa is a new module that is being run for the first time this year. The period that will be studied is from 800-1500 AD, encompassing a wide range of themes from trade to religion. As you will be expected to run your own seminar, you are able to specialise in any aspect of Medieval Africa. I have particularly enjoyed the module thus far, as it is something that I have not had the opportunity to study before, and if I am honest, knew nothing about until now."

Neanderthals – Penny Spikins

Whatever image the word 'Neanderthal' conjures up for you, these archaic humans never fail to inspire, challenge and fascinate us. In these seminars we consider the world of the Neanderthals and what happened when they met modern humans such as ourselves. The seminars unite scientific and arts based approaches in considering such topics as perceptions of Neanderthals and portrayals in the media and fiction, diet and subsistence, settlement and mobility, social relationships, art and symbolism and burial. A great source of lively debate, guaranteed to challenge and always enjoyable (I love teaching this module). In looking at our closest cousins we ultimately explore what it means to be human.

Palaeodiet – Ol Craig

You should choose this course as after all palaeodiet is the 'bread and butter' of archaeology – from scraps of animals and plants, fireplaces, broken potsherds, flint scrapers to medieval banquets and pineapple pits. Food transcends all periods and contexts; it is multidimensional, ritual and mundane, ecological and cultural. We will look at scientific methods and cultural approaches to food studies whilst eating our way though the term (with cakes and other delicacies).

Public Buildings – Kate Giles

My 2012/13 third year Assessed Seminar module is concerned with historic 'public buildings', built between the medieval period and the present day. These include guildhalls and town halls, assembly rooms, leisure buildings and institutional buildings including law courts, museums, schools, prisons etc. In each seminar we will explore the idea of 'the public' and explore who built these buildings and how they worked using spatial analysis and drawing on archaeological and architectural sources, historical sources, pictorial and even fictional accounts. Students will be encouraged to structure seminars around a series of case studies, and be provided with plenty of support and guidance to make these seminars really interesting – and fun!

This is a new module for 2012/13, replacing a more generic buildings archaeology module last run in 2010. In the past this has also had a great track record of students doing really well and progressing to MA and even PhD study thereafter!

Figure 4 – The Merchant Adventurer's Hall, one of York's Guildhalls (Image copyright – Mark Simpson)

Sustaining the Historic Environment: Issues in Conversation – Gill Chitty

'Sustaining the Historic Environment' is an opportunity to engage head on with the issues that climate change – and societal response to it – brings to conservation of the historic environment: the way we think about change, the intentional and unintentional impacts of adaptation, from denial to disaster scenarios. Sustainable practices are cultural not environmental. Adaptation is about behaviours as much as technical responses. We will look at case studies, campaign issues for the environmental and heritage sector, and get involved in some very contemporary debates. This will challenge you to work with a rapidly-changing area of policy and practice, where positions are contested and there are no easy solutions.

Viking-Age Britain and Ireland – Steve Ashby

The breadth of this topic really does give you scope to find something you are interested in. Death and burial, hoarding, power and conflict, identity and culture contact, religion, landscape and settlement, craft and industry, trade and economics: the choice is yours, providing the context is Britain and/or

Ireland between the late 8th and mid-11th centuries. There is a lot of scope to work with documentary sources, place names, and art history, as well as archaeology (which may include bones, artefacts, or biomolecular science, for instance), and theoretical debates. So if you fancy something early-medieval, something with a bit of controversy, or just something that offers a lot of choice within its spatial-temporal parameters, then give it a shot. If you are curious as to what Viking Britain and Ireland is all about, you could do worse than check this out: `http://tinyurl.com/7pmc2o6` (or go to YouTube and type in 'Blood of the Vikings').

Useful Web Links

The intranet page for students choosing module options, with links to information on all of the options `http://tinyurl.com/6rckw7q`

Information on Jon Finch's Modern Landscapes course `http://tinyurl.com/7323n8k`

Many thanks to all staff and students who have contributed towards this article.

5 Arcifact – Unearthing York's Homeless Heritage

Navid Tomlinson (mailto:nt588@york.ac.uk)

Life-wide learning is the way in which we learn and develop ourselves through different spaces and places that we inhabit every day of our lives (Jackson, 2011), and it is this life-wide journey that I have had the pleasure of experiencing over the last six months, that I hope to introduce you to, whilst outlining the main results of the research, and its wider implication for archaeology as a subject.

For the past six months a team unlike any that York has seen before has been working together to use archaeology in an entirely different way in order to shine a new light on both past and present society. The Arcifact team have worked together on a fantastic journey to bring together an exhibition that changes not just our understanding of modern day York, but also poses some poignant questions about the way in which different areas of society understood the landscape in years gone by.

Figure 1 – Collaborative working allowing us to get more accurate artefact interpretations (Image copyright – Martyn King)

Our unusual team consisted of residents from the homeless shelter Arc Light, and students from York's archaeology department, working as equals in order to understand and interpret the site in a more accurate manner. My involvement in the project began with the excavation in October 2011 – a week-long dig based in the grounds of Bootham Park Hospital, an area that had been used by the homeless community over the last twenty years. The excavation was an amazing learning curve, with finds such as crisp packets, drug paraphernalia,

CBM, sweet wrappers and other such seemingly mundane objects being given a story and life by our homeless colleagues. It is here that lies the genius of Rachael Kiddey's project. By working with people who do have or used to have regular contact with the kind of objects being excavated, their true meaning and use can be interpreted far more effectively than anything archaeologists could have achieved on our own.

The experience of finding clay pipe and considering it one of the best archaeological finds on the site was one that took time to get used to; however, soon enough the thrill of being able to date some finds immediately thanks to best before dates, rather than slaving through typology books, began to catch a hold as we developed an understanding of our site. While a full finds report has yet to be published, our initial observations gained through the extensive post-excavation analysis uncovered a number of interesting themes running through the site.

A large number of our finds related to smoking and food as would be expected. The food types were primarily focused around crisps and sweets. As one of our ex-homeless colleagues observed, when you are homeless you do not have access to places to cook or prepare food, and takeaways are often too expensive, so crisps and sweets make do. A large number of milk bottle tops were found on site; the reason suggested by another ex-homeless colleague is that milk is more "comforting and filling" than water, as well as making you feel better if on drugs or alcohol. The presence of drug paraphernalia but no spent needles is also an unusual occurrence. We know from certain finds and what we have been told that drugs were being taken at the site; however our excavation suggests that needles are being responsibly dispensed, most likely in the Sin Bins widely available for the homeless communities in York.

Figure 2 – The team working together on site (Image copyright – Martyn King)

As well as our finds, one of the most important aspects of what we achieved in the excavation was engagement. Archaeology is fun. It is vital that as prospective archaeologists we introduce as many people from as wide a background as possible to the huge amounts you can get out of archaeology and ensure that it does not become a subject done only by a certain few. The more interest that people take in archaeology, the greater the opportunity for more excavations, and overall a better understanding of the past; as mused by Time Team's recently departed Mick Aston in an interview with British Archaeology, "Unless we get that public interested in the subject, we're never going to go anywhere... professional archaeologists will disappear if the public aren't interested" (Aston, 2012). In a period when archaeology budgets are being squeezed, it is vital that we demonstrate the relevance of our subject by the engagement of others. Projects such as this in which there is the breaking down of social boundaries through excavation is one of the best possible ways of doing that, something that is starting to be picked up around the country (Digability, 2012).

This movement towards wider participation in archaeology is also the key, I would suggest, to getting better interpretations of sites. In a site like Bootham Park hospital the advantage is clear: working with people who are familiar with the objects being found is only logical, however, does the same advantage of working in a diverse group apply to older artefacts and sites? My experiences at Bootham would suggest yes. Some of our more 'historical' finds such as clay pipe, green glaze ware and other older ceramics were given interpretations by our homeless colleagues different to anything I would have ever even thought of and yet these suggestions are equally (if not more) plausible then any of the interpretations given by 'proper' archaeologists. Why? Because different life experiences inevitably affect the way in which we understand and interpret sites, and if we accept this then we should do our utmost to find excavators with all backgrounds if possible. If we are inevitably biased in our interpretations, then we should try and mitigate it with as many different biased views as possible.

The work that we have done at Bootham and with Rachael Kiddey's use of 'Memory Maps' in which people map out 'their' version of York, opens up some fascinating questions about how landscape is viewed by different parts of society today. Many of our colleagues who slept rough in York in the past saw the city in a very different way to those of us who had not. This therefore raises the question of how the landscape was viewed by different aspects of society in the past. Questions we often hear in seminars, such as "how was this landscape viewed", seem redundant without first asking the questions "who was doing the viewing", while a landscape may be industrial to one strata of society it could be any number of things to another.

The excavation at Bootham and subsequent work has been a fantastic experience for which I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of. Not only have we opened a new window into homelessness in York, and asked some fascinating questions about how, as archaeologists, we view the past, but I have also made some brilliant friends in the process. What I have been able to learn from the experience far outstrips what I can learn in a lecture theatre, both in regards to archaeology's practical applications, and in learning how to appreciate the value of a different kind of expert.

Figure 3 – Collaborative working in action (Image copyright – Martyn King)

What I have outlined here are just a few of the conclusions and discoveries that we have made on our six month adventure. For the full results of our excavation and mapping work, we will be running a public exhibition between the 9th and 16th of March, where a video of the excavation and post-excavation analysis will be shown and the team will be available to answer any questions about the project, and illustrate and expand upon what has been mentioned here in regards to the impact we have made in understanding homelessness in York, as well as exploring the issues brought by the project in regards to how we interpret sites and finds.

For more details please visit our website at `http://www.arcifact.webs.com` or view our flyer at `http://tinyurl.com/7cgbdu9`

Bibliography

- Aston, M. (2012). Time Up. *British Archaeology* 123, p.11.
- Digability. (2012). *Digability: Overcoming barriers to archaeology.* Available at `http://tinyurl.com/76gkev4` (Accessed 24th February 2012).
- Jackson, N (2011). *Learning for a Complex World: A Lifewide Concept of Learning, Education and Personal Development.* Bloomington: Author House.

Further Reading

- Kiddey, R (2011). In J. Hallam (ed) *Homeless Heritage.* Word press. 2011. Available at `http://tinyurl.com/6q722k3` (accessed 24th February 2012).

- Kiddey, R. & Schofield, J. (2010). Digging for (invisible) people. *British Archaeology* 113, p.18-23. Also available online at `http://tinyurl.com/7hx79qx`
- Tomlinson, N (2012). *Arcifact – Unearthing York's Homeless Heritage.* Webs. January 2012. Available at `http://www.arcifact.webs.com` (accessed 24th February 2012).

6 Gawthorpe Manor: A Modern Estate in the Making (Part 1 of 2)

David Altoft

This is a summary of the medieval manor of Gawthorpe and the University of York's current archaeological investigations into its history and context within the wider and better understood house and landscape of Harewood near Leeds, West Yorkshire. A more in-depth discussion of the site and excavation of it will be made following the next field school excavation in May.

Gawthorpe in Context (the Beginning and the End)

Harewood House, one of the finest 18th century country houses in Yorkshire is well known for its Chippendale furniture, grand terrace and attractive rolling landscape designed by 'Capability' Brown; but few visitors will know the other half of its history, before it was built in 1759.

In 1739, the Lascelles family bought a medieval hall within the joined manorial lands of Gawthorpe and Harewood. These two lands had a close history, not only because they bordered each other, but also because they had both been owned by the Wentworth family in the sixteenth century following an equally long history of shared ownership between two closely tied families since the hall's establishment by the Gascoigne family in the thirteenth century (Rayner, pers. comm., 02/2012). One family lived in the medieval manor house just above a stream called Stank Beck while the other lived in the modest Harewood Castle, situated on a hill not far north of the hall.

However, this long-unchanged habitation of the landscape drastically changed under the ownership from 1739 by the Lascelles who were prospering from an increasingly wealthy income from recent ventures in trade and sugar plantations in Barbados. This was a time of radical change in British society and the steady expansion of a new Empire brought greater stratification of classes. It seems likely that Thomas Lascelles, who was a Yorkshire MP, bought Harewood to be close to his constituency. Like his father, Edwin Lascelles was a politician as well as a super-merchant. We know from documentary evidence that he spent much of his time in London, but perhaps used Harewood as a convenient summer retreat close to his own constituency of Scarborough and then later Northallerton. Soon after the inheritance of Gawthorpe and Harewood from his father in 1753, Edwin Lascelles used Gawthorpe Hall on a permanent basis, mostly serving to entertain guests and allow quick access to his constituencies (Tatlioglu, 2010).

It is not long before the more frequent use of the hall encourages Lascelles to makes greater changes to its appearance. Unlike his father, who only made minor alterations to the hall during his infrequent residence there, Edwin sought to sever any association with its increasingly dated, feudal connotations and instead replace it with something more appropriate to demonstrate the success of his capitalistic investments in Barbados and his resulting rise in eighteenth century polite society. To begin with, it was not the hall that was altered but the land around it. Throughout its history, Gawthorpe Hall was surrounded by enclosed fields and buildings to serve the farms and accommodate the people who contributed towards the prosperity of Gawthorpe (Tatlioglu, 2010); though in a new age of international commerce and industry, prosperity of the noble

classes took on entirely different dimensions of space, time and scale. Agriculture was something that could be done hundreds, even thousands of miles away, changing nobility's perception of the use of their immediate environment.

Comparing the landscapes of Harewood in the 1720s (shortly before it was bought by the Lascelles) and today, it is not just the change in house that is obvious, however impressive that transition is, it is also the change in the landscape the replacement of functional enclosed fields with attractive open meadows. It is true that like with many other contemporary transitions of land-ownership, post-medieval countryside was driven by a newly found economic advantage of pastoral lands for rearing sheep for wool (Harewood greatly profited from its significant contribution towards the wool trade in nearby Leeds) (Tatlioglu, 2010); however, this change, in particular to country estates, was also influenced by aesthetic concerns relating to expression of affluence, stability and conformity to the fashionable ideals of polite society where the 'natural' landscape could be incorporated into social and leisure activities. These differences in the perception and portrayal of the landscape of Gawthorpe and Harewood in the 1720s (Finch, pers. comm., 04/2011) and today are evident in the 'tidy' sloping lawn in front of the house designed by 'Capability' Brown; the concealed church and other buildings perhaps reflecting the diminishing importance of religion in the modern world and the increasing efforts of expressed individuality and self-sufficiency amongst the upper classes; and the flooding of the beck to form an attractive lake all of which must have required a great deal of investment of time, money and labour to achieve and maintain without obvious effort.

Although the appearance of Edwin Lascelles' land had been extensively modified throughout the mid-eighteenth century, the hall of Gawthorpe remained. To complete this post-medieval transition, Harewood House was built in 1773. Two years after its completion and the family had moved in, the hall was demolished. It seems from a letter to his Steward, Samuel Popplewell in February 1773, that "I wish Muschamp who be Expeditious in Pulling down the Old House. I see no occasion for the Old Brewhouse nor Laundry to be kept up" (Rayner, pers. comm., 02/2012). Was this the end of Gawthorpe Manor. . . ?

Gawthorpe in Context (Middle History)

The major transitions of Gawthorpe and Harewood summarised above are merely the first and final chapters of the story of the latter's eventual dominance over the former. Documentary evidence reveals further changes in the structure of Gawthorpe Manor during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. The earliest known significant alteration to the hall was in 1480 when William Gascoigne received permission to crenellate it (Tatlioglu, 2010). This is significant to the interpretation of transition from medieval manor to post-medieval country estate because it shows that even three hundred years before Gawthorpe Hall was replaced with Harewood House, the owners of the land desired to maintain its affluent and fashionable appearance. To achieve this, not only did a major change to the site occur in the mid-eighteenth century but at multiple times throughout its earlier history it was extensively modified. This has major implications for the interpretation of the archaeology of the hall which will be discussed next time.

A number of alterations to the hall during Sir Thomas Wentworth's residence there are documented. His father, Sir William Wentworth can be considered to

be the first person at Gawthorpe known to allow the abandonment of certain buildings within its land when he married into the family living at Gawthorpe before him and subsequently bought Harewood Castle in 1616, thereby amalgamating the two lands, abandoning the castle and making Gawthorpe, not Harewood, the living quarters of the owners until Edwin Lascelles and his own reversal of this change. Similar to the consequences of the manor becoming the primary seat of the Lascelles family, Thomas Wentworth's more permanent residence at Gawthorpe led to significant changes in its architecture. A new large sandstone wing and walled ornamental gardens are demonstrated in William van der Hagen's illustrations of the hall in the 1720s, just prior to the arrival of the Lascelles. An inventory of the interior of the hall and its contents in 1657 may offer the closest documentation of how the hall was used. A 'Dyneing Parlour', 'Great Chamber' and two private rooms were in one part of the hall while a servicing wing contained two parlours, two pantries, a kitchen, a larder, two cellars, a brewhouse, dairy and washhouse (Tatlioglu, 2010). From this it is apparent that by the seventeenth century, Gawthorpe Manor was architecturally a blend of medieval and classical design and was equipped for all the typical requirements of a manorial family. Furthermore, it highlights that any evolution in Gawthorpe was not simple, but progressive over a very long period, accelerating and decelerating whenever a new family arrived with different requirements or personal, social or financial needs. Gawthorpe Manor is also unique archaeologically as it is one of few manor houses to survive well beyond the medieval period, allowing archaeologists to trace its significant changes and infer from those the equivalent changes in society that served as a backdrop to the life history of the building and the people that it contained and served (Finch, pers. comm., 04/2011).

With this gradual evolution of Gawthorpe Manor in mind, the apparently sudden decision made by Edwin Lascelles to demolish the hall in 1773 and his dislike of it may at first be assumed to be due to his aspiration to portray his growing wealth, but such an interpretation is confused by the fact that he had employed the architect John Carr to lavishly modify the hall with a new portico for the main entrance, a garden house for the grounds and a new barn for the surrounding fields in 1754, just five years before work on the new house and gardens began (and one year before the first documented plans for it). Surely, spending good money on major refurbishments and developments to a building and then within a few years knocking it down and spending many more thousands of pounds to create a brand new, even larger one seems a bit short-sighted and financially reckless even for a gentleman who was fast becoming one of Yorkshire's most successful land magnates (a kind of billionaire of his time) (Tatlioglu, 2010). It is possible that Edwin Lascelles went to such extremes to maintain this kind of affluent image to the rest of society, but it is more likely that the final decision to demolish Gawthorpe Hall in the letter above was the final act of a long series of decisions and plans, not necessarily documented or surviving for us to know. As Gawthorpe Manor had been modified over many centuries, it is quite possible that its end was also gradual. The use of documentary evidence from Harewood has proven useful for identifying many of the aspects of how its owners wanted to portray themselves and their land, but its shortfall in allowing us to access many of the personal decisions and private, not discussed or forgotten actions behind the changes that resulted in the evolution of the modern estate have called upon archaeology to attempt

to find many of these aspects which may have been buried with the hall two hundred and fifty years ago.

This is what Dr. Jon Finch of the University of York hopes to better understand by excavating the almost forgotten manor over the coming years from 2011 (Finch, n.d.). Fortunately, there are a few sporadic periods of surviving documentary evidence, one being between 1770 and 1774 during which numerous bills to workmen are recorded for "the pulling down at Old House" (Rayner, pers. comm., 02/2012). These seem to prove that the demolition of the house started before the new house was completed in 1771 and that already, Edwin Lascelles no longer thought of it as his home. If the demolition did occur over four or more years, small parts of the hall and its adjoining buildings must have been removed bit at a time. By excavating what remains beneath the ground it is also hoped that the order that different parts were raised can be understood. An analysis of how he plans to achieve this will be made in the following issue of The Post Hole in May during his second season of full-scale excavation there.

Acknowledgements (for parts one and two)

I wish to thank Dr. Jon Finch and Emily Rayner for information about the context of the site and their research there. I would also like to thank Drs. Matt Williams and Daryl Stump for sharing their reports on the stratigraphy and finds within the trenches they were responsible for during excavation in 2011.

Bibliography

- Finch, J. (n.d.) 'harewoodproject'. `http://sites.google.com/site/harewoodproject/` (Accessed 26/02/2012)
- Tatlioglu, T. (2010). 'Biographies of People and Place: The Harewood Estate, 1698-1813'. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of York.

7 Masters Advice 2

Christina Cartaciano (mailto:christina.cartaciano@gmail.com) , **Russell Almond** (mailto:ra537@york.ac.uk)

Carrying on from last issue, we have more Masters course advice for you, from current students at York...

A Master's in Science: A Degree Worth Doing by Christina Cartaciano

As a former team member of the Post Hole, the editors asked me to write a little blurb about the MSc program I am currently on, as well as offer any advice I may have about taking on such a course. The MSc in Bioarchaeology is normally directed by Dr. Oliver Craig, but as he is currently on sabbatical, I get to enjoy academic supervision from Professor Matthew Collins, a man who is extremely enthusiastic and a human compendium of potential and published research in the field of bioarchaeology.

While I was completing my undergraduate degree in York last year, it seemed the logical step to stay on for a Masters course (indeed, it was the least problematic option when it came to considering how to organise, pack, and move three years' accumulation of random furniture, books, shoes, and clothes). On a more serious level, however, York is one of the few places in the U.K. to offer such a high-quality course with very well known, and well published, lecturers.

As any good student should, I asked all my postgraduate friends, who had either just handed in their Masters project or had graduated the year before, what the course was like. The overwhelming majority of them described it in one word: "intense". Little did I realize what exactly it was they meant by that description. "Intense". I think that is as accurately as I can convey to you the feeling of being a postgraduate. I remember the days of first year, when there was nary a care in the world... Or those in the second and third year, when I only had to concentrate, during any given term, on just one module and/or serious piece of writing (i.e. Independent Projects, Assessed Seminars, Dissertations). I think the best way to illustrate the intense sense of stress I have during term time is to tell you, the reader, to imagine the contents of your second- and third-year modules being squished into two terms, with deadline dates of two essays and a skills assessment report twice a term and the specter of that all important Masters project to sort out with your course director and relevant people.

And being the world's worst procrastinator that I am (and I do have a plaque hiding somewhere in bottom of my wardrobe), I struggled for the majority of first term to get myself motivated enough to do reading and writing in time. To be honest, I do not think that I have perfected the technique just yet, but I think I will have to give an update about my summative assessment deadlines in the next issue. But as I tell everyone that asks me what the program is like, I always mention in addition to the scary bits, that the degree is definitely worth the stress and the camp-outs in the library until closing time. Meeting the new people on my course, staying in touch with friends who have stayed and REALLY getting to know the subject area you are interested in, and finding

people who are willing to guide you, that has definitely made it more than bearable. So if you are wondering, "Can I actually do a Masters?", provided you have the funding to do so, DO IT! You will be amazed at what you will learn.

MA Joy!!!! by Russell Almond

I have already done my undergraduate at the University of York. I knew York, the Department and some of the returning students really well. The reasons I chose for staying at York were that the department is great and the staff are really helpful and friendly to talk to... maybe tolerant in my case!

I decided to do an MA in Mesolithic studies, as this was a natural progression from the topics I chose to do during my undergraduate degree. You may have heard this a thousand and one times but yes, there is a lot of work to do. You have to be on the ball with the time management but also allow yourself to have time for fun. I am basically suggesting hitting the Willow every other night (I am sure you will discover this place) would not be a good idea; but relax and have fun with friends.

It is possible to have a job while doing an MA, but in my experience do not do more than two days a week of paid work as this heavily affected my studies and was not a pleasant experience. Some important advice I will give to you is be on the ball if self-funding! My funding experience was not problem-free and this caused a huge amount of stress, which again affected my experience during the first part of my Masters. Make sure that you are on top of what is being said to you and do not believe everything that you are told. Check. Double check! Then check some more. Make them know your name!

As I have said I am doing Mesolithic Studies and as other articles show, you will discover that whatever course you choose to do it will involve so much more. You will be able to choose many other topics aside from your core modules. For example, I chose to do a module in Artefacts; this brought artefacts to life, we were taught that they are not just material culture from the past but that they have their own stories allowing them to come alive! However, there is a lot of work to do in this year of study. You will feel under a lot pressure with the essays and presentations but also such a sense of accomplishment when you have produced the work that you will forget the worry you had for it.

You have to want to do an MA and you have to have picked the right place to study. York is a wonderful place to live in and an even better to place to study. The department is very supportive and more than willing to help out with any issues that may arise in your studies; I found my decision to study at York to be one of my best I have ever made. I am sure I have gone on a little too much so I better send this off. Besides, I have some reading to do on the interpretations of antlers in the Mesolithic before tomorrow...

8 An Etiquette Guide to... Fieldwalking

Khadija McBain (mailto:secretary@theposthole.org) , **Post Hole Team** (mailto:team@theposthole.org)

A guide to one of the most important aspects of archaeological field work:
1) Turn up!
2) Turn up to the second day as well.
3) At first it seems really exciting traipsing around a field looking for surface finds, but after lunch it will wear off. Make sure you pack a can of red bull for lunch, this will keep you going and give you that keen/hype pretence of caring.
4) Hope that you have a really good group, so that there is enough solid banter for two days.
5) Feel enthusiastic about every rock you find, hoping it might be pottery or bone.
6) Do not complain about the weather, be it rain or shine, too hot or too cold – it is always better than lectures and essays.
7) Try to keep looking down most of the time. Of course you want to look up to talk to the person next to you, but finds are at ground level. Your supervisor may not be happy if you walk right past a Roman coin hoard because you are discussing X Factor with the next person in line!

Figure 1 – Students fieldwalking (Roman coin hoard not shown) (Image copyright – Mark Simpson)

8) Watch your feet! This might seem obvious, but you do need to concentrate both on the ground in front of you and where you are walking. Twisting your ankle puts you on the sidelines for the rest of the day.

9) Everything is important... until it gets discarded. Do not feel downhearted if the 78 bits of clay pipe you found go onto the 'spoil heap', because that one fragment of Samian Ware or flint blade you spotted right at the end will likely be the big find of the day.

10) Also obvious, but listen to what the module leader says about dressing for the conditions. Warm clothes will be needed; remember it is grim up north (no time for north/south debate) so it *will* be cold, muddy and rainy (or even snowy!). Wellies or boots, a coat and possibly a hat will make you feel much more comfortable.

11) Before you go fieldwalking, make sure you actually go and look at the find examples that Cath will have on a tray (usually after a fieldwalking lecture). Not looking at the finds means that Cath will be inundated on the day with find bags filled with pebbles, sticks and chewing gum.

12) If you find something exciting make sure to make a big fuss and wave it about noisily. Not only will your peers be jealous, but they will be determined to find one themselves, therefore motivating everyone. However, make sure it is not a pebble, stick or bit of chewing gum, because that would be just embarrassing.

Figure 2 – Happy Harry has found something... (Image Copyright – Mark Simpson)

13) Have fun! Non-archaeology students will be jealous you were walking around a field for the day, and that it is *actually* part of your course.

About The Post Hole

The Post Hole is a student run journal for all those interested in archaeology. It aims to promote discussion and the flow of ideas in the department of Archaeology for the University of York and the wider archaeological community. If you

would like to get involved with the editorial process, writing articles or photography then please get in touch via email – (`mailto:editor@theposthole.org`).