

# Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 4

June 2010

## Buckton Castle 2010

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The aerial photographs which accompany this article were supplied by Greg Colley who has a business taking such photographs using a camera mounted on a model helicopter.. Below are Norman Redhead and John Roberts puzzling over Buckton's mysteries .



Brian Grimsditch discusses the final season of excavations at Buckton Castle, Tameside. (above) Did the enigmatic monument give up its secrets? Read on....

Buckton Castle, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, lies at just over 1100 feet above sea level on Buckton Hill which rises above the village of Carrbrook in Stalybridge. All that is visible is a sub-circular earthwork bank surrounded by a deep ditch. It was thought for a long time to be a class of castle known as a ringworks that comprises of an earthen bank possible topped by a palisade and surrounded by a ditch.

There have been several rounds of modern investigations that have included landscape surveys and repair work to 'robber trenches'. In 2007 funding was supplied by Tameside MBC to carry out a full scale excavation concentrating on the earthen bank on the western side of the castle. The excavation showed that, at least on that side, it had a massive wall some 2.8M wide placed on the outer edge of the earthen bank. These results suggested that it may not have been a ringwork castle but something else.

The results were so intriguing that further funds were supplied for another season of work in 2008. This time the ambitious investigation centred on the northern entrance and the eastern bank and ditch. The trench in the eastern ditch proved problematic with health



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Thank you to all who have contributed to this newsletter. Keep those contributions coming in. The 'Dig Manchester' legacy website now has pdfs of the booklets produced for the Moston Hall and the Northenden Mill excavations. These are on the page <http://www.digmanchester.com/library/archaeologicalreports.html> under the heading 'Site Guide' on the 'Moston' and 'Northenden' pages.

## Some Forthcoming Talks and Events

### Wigan Archaeological Society (at Baden Powell Centre, Wigan at 7:30pm)

07/07/10      Battle of Preston 1648      Paul Cross

**\* See later in the issue for a notice about the forthcoming Industrial Archaeology Conference in Merseyside \***

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## Buckton Castle (cont)

and safety issues preventing a full depth excavation across the extent of the ditch, however, it was possible to see that the ditch was cut into the natural bedrock with at least 2 metres of infill being removed from the bottom. The trench across the eastern bank showed that here too the bank contained the remains of a wall at least 2.8m wide, though the outer face had collapsed into the ditch, demonstrating that instead of what was thought to be an earthen bank was in fact a probable curtain wall composed of an inner and outer face of worked masonry filled with large angular rubble. The greatest results came from the trench across the northern entrance that, although quite badly damaged by early 18<sup>th</sup> century intrusion, revealed a masonry gateway with a metalled surface and at least one, possibly two rooms to the west of the entrance. Most delightful was the recovery of five pieces of medieval pottery found in a secure context directly above the metalled surface of the gateway along with several small animal bones. This was the first occasion that any dateable artefacts have been found at the castle.

This year was the third and possibly final year of excavations at Buckton Castle. As with the previous two seasons the work was carried out by volunteers under the loose supervision of Brian Grimsditch, Adam Thompson and John Roberts and they would like to thank all those involved for their hard work and enthusiasm which made the excavation of this very important and prestigious monument an absolute pleasure.

Work concentrated on the causeway and ditch at the northern entrance, the southern 'entrance', (thought to have been knocked through by the Victorians), a small trench over what may be an out

**Cont on pg 3**

## Federation members

The following groups are members of the Federation:

Bolton Archaeology and Egyptology Society, Bury Archaeological Group, Darwen Local History Society, Glossop and Longdendale Archaeological Society, Holcombe Moor Heritage Group, Littleborough Historical and Archaeological Society, Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society, Mellor Archaeological Trust, Moston And District Archaeological and Social History Society, Prestwich Heritage Society, Royton Lives Through the Ages, Saddleworth Archaeological Trust, South Manchester Archaeological Research Team, South Trafford Archaeological Group, Tameside Archaeological Society, Wigan Archaeological Society.



The southern entrance and the quarry beyond

works and the south east corner. In the south eastern corner we were looking for a structure shown only on an 1840s plan but could find no indications of any buildings. The trench over the outworks whilst indicating that it was built up with similar material to the interior of the castle again showed little indication of masonry structures.

It was a 'toss up' between the other two trenches as to which was the most visually spectacular. The trench through the southern 'entrance' demonstrated that the curtain wall extended to

there and that the wall had been broken through at a later

stage. The presence of pipe stems and Victorian pottery confirmed our provisional interpretations. What this trench did do was to show that the wall was built onto an older soil and the interior built up with spoil from the ditch when it was dug out. A full profile through and along the wall gave dramatic pictures of the wall itself.

The final trench along the causeway and into the ditch on the eastern side of the causeway also provided dramatic picture. The question to be answered was 'what and how was the causeway constructed?' Sterling digging revealed that below at least 2m of infill was a rock cut ditch with a near vertical inner face cut into the natural rock with similar though not as vertical outer face. It was also seen that the ditch came to a rounded terminal end at the entrance with the causeway being a projection of the natural rock left in to bridge the gap over the ditch. The lower section of the causeway was around 45 degrees that about half way up became almost vertical.

Once again Buckton Castle is the site that always keeps giving and although there is a paucity of artefacts the positive archaeology encountered is astounding and justifiably earns its sobriquet of 'The Archaeological Jewel of Tameside'. Further than that it is possibly one of the most important sites in Greater Manchester.

Brian Grimsditch



The section across the ditch



An overhead shot (left) shows a strange grouping at Buckton (arrowed). A zoomed in view (below) shows volunteers having a well-earned rest!



## Cheadle Green

Brian Grimsditch discusses the beginnings of archaeological investigation on the site of the Village Green in Cheadle.

Cheadle Green in Stockport will be two hundred years old in September this year and the Friends of Cheadle Green Civic Society wish to celebrate this milestone by improving and renovating the green, making it a more accessible and pleasant place to visit, and having an event to celebrate the date. On the site a Hall once existed that was built in the 1750's. Nothing now remains above ground, the land having been landscaped and a concrete pond having been constructed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century over the northern end of where the Hall once stood.

**Cont of pg 5**

## History

Cheadle Hall as depicted on the tithe map was constructed in 1756 by the Rector of Cheadle Rev. Thomas Egerton. He bequeathed the hall to his nephew Edward Berisford in 1762 who subsequently sold it to John Harrison a Stockport merchant in 1773.

An Act of parliament in 1810 caused the land in front of the hall, then owned by John Harrison, to remain open and unenclosed forever creating Cheadle Green. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the hall was converted into a well know boarding school for young ladies following which it was used for a short time by Manchester Royal Infirmary as a convalescent. In the second half of the

19<sup>th</sup> century the hall was subject of development and was extended to the north and east with a further extension being built off the south east corner between 1872 and 1898.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was used for various businesses such as a furniture repository and afterwards by the Milk Marketing Board. However, after being empty for a number of years, the building was demolished in 1958. Photographs show the building to have been brick-built, of 3 storeys, and possibly 9 bays.

As a result of the research undertaken by the Friends and the Cheadle Civic Society and on consulting Norman Redhead it was decided that any groundwork to be undertaken may intrude on below ground archaeology. Also if anything remained of the buildings identified on early mapping it would be a good opportunity to conduct an archaeological excavation that would involve members of the community. Consequently Andy Coutts of the South Manchester Archaeological Research Trust (SMART) and Brian Grimsditch of Centre for Applied Archaeology (CfAA) were asked to supervise an evaluation of the Green utilising members of the local community and the Civic Society members to conduct the evaluation.



Work gets underway (photo GMAU)



The Cheadle Green volunteers (photo GMAU)

## The Archaeological evaluation

The evaluation was carried out on a Sunday in April by around thirteen volunteers from the local community, members of the Civic Society, members of SMART, and was supervised by Brian Grimsditch (CfAA) and Andy Coutts (SMART).

Using the early mapping to determine the location of the buildings associated with Cheadle Hall, six small trenches were opened and in all but one trench positive archaeology in the form of brick walls and floor surfaces were uncovered at a very shallow depth. The trench that was most useful for location

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purposes revealed a curved wall that has been interpreted as the bay window of the southern gable of the hall that was the extent of the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century development. Many artefacts in the form of pottery and clay pipe stems were recovered during the evaluation.

The evaluation was able to show that a great deal of the hall was probably preserved at a shallow depth and was eminently suitable for further investigations in the future.

As a result the Civic Society, in collaboration with Stockport MBC and other associated groups and individuals are making plans and seeking funding to conduct a full scale community excavation in September 2010 and ahead of any groundwork to improve the site. The excavation is to be conducted by local people including a local school under the supervision of professional archaeologists. It is hoped that the event will culminate in an open day when members of the community will be able to see the archaeology uncovered along with historical tours and other events.



Work in progress (Photo GMAU)

Brian Grimsditch

## South Manchester Archaeological Research Team

I am delighted to announce the successful bid to HLF for this year's proposed community dig at Dunham Massey. I have previously given an overview of our intentions to carry out further investigative work at Dunham on the back of the findings in July 2009, during the course of the evaluation as to the in situ archaeology still evident at two separate sites within the deer park. SMART are leading their first community dig in conjunction with the contractors selected from the estimates submitted. Oxford Archaeology North are to lead as the contractor with SMART and federation groups to assist in a supervisory role. The invitation for assistance was discussed at a previous meeting, so once again I extend the invitation for help and involvement with this first of hopefully many digs funded through HLF, where local groups can combine their skills and experience for what I am sure will be a successful project. **Could all group chairs please pass on the invitation to their members?**

The details are that we will be carrying out the dig between 18<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and will continue through to 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010, it will focus on one of the two areas investigated and will be over the site of the 17<sup>th</sup> c – 18<sup>th</sup> c stable block. **Spaces will be limited** as the community, local schools, YAC and community groups will be receiving invitations to dig, and our main requirements are for supervisors, although this will not preclude you from digging. We will require assistance from 19<sup>th</sup> July to 31<sup>st</sup> July, and we anticipate you will be aiding and supervising up to a maximum of 5 volunteers, you will not be required to work with the younger groups as the education team at the National Trust, OAN and YAC will be responsible for this side of the event. I can supply any further information if required, please E mail me on:- [andy\\_coutts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:andy_coutts@hotmail.co.uk) or ring me on 07977308264—0161 283 6455.

Andy Coutts, Chair, SMART (South Manchester Archaeological Research Team)

This year's conference will be hosted by the Merseyside Industrial Heritage Society (MIHS), using the Tom Rolt Conference Centre at The National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port.

Housed on the seven acre site of what was formerly a thriving canal docks, the museum's Victorian buildings sit amidst a scene of locks and moorings vibrant with historic and visiting narrow boats. Designed by Telford under the direction of William Jessop, the docks played a vital role in the industrial development of the North West, and were in use as late as the 1950s.

"Behind the scenes" visits to areas not normally open to the public will be a feature of the conference.

### **Speakers and subjects:**

*Lee's Tapestry Works - Birkenhead (Colin Simpson)*

Originally from Wolverhampton, Colin studied at Leeds and Birmingham Universities before coming to Birkenhead 30 years ago as Keeper of Arts. He is now Wirral's Principal Museums Officer, and runs the Williamson Art Gallery & Museum and Birkenhead Priory.

*Living in the Industrial City - Workers' housing in Manchester (Mike Nevell)*

Mike is Head of Archaeology at the University of Salford and is responsible for the Centre of Applied Archaeology. With more than 20 years experience in the field, he is chairman of the CBA North West Industrial Panel, a committee member of the AIA and co-editor of the Industrial Archaeology Review.

*Managing a Large Object Collection (Peter Collins)*

Peter is Collections Manager at the National Waterways Museum, Ellesmere Port, having previously been Collections Officer at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford.

*Excavations and the Liverpool Museum (Mark Adams)*

A graduate of Liverpool University, Mark has over 25 years field experience. Since 1994 he has worked for the National Museums Liverpool Field Archaeology Unit, where he is currently Senior Archaeological Project Officer, responsible for projects ranging from desk-based assessments to major excavations.

*Salt making in Cumbria and Cheshire (Andrew Fielding)*

A graduate of Cardiff University, Andrew was awarded a Leverhulme grant to study Marine Archaeology at St Andrews. From 1977 to 1989 he worked for the Mary Rose Trust, becoming Deputy Director. He then moved to the Lion Salt Works to establish the trust and to raise funds for its restoration.

### **Getting to the conference**

*By road: From Junction 9 on the M53 follow brown signs for 'The Boat Museum'*

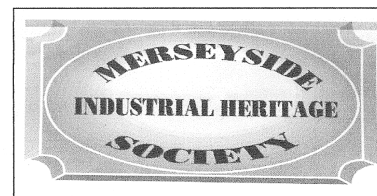
*By rail: 10 minute walk from Ellesmere Port station. Merseyrail operates a half-hourly service from central Liverpool and Wirral stations*

*By bicycle: the towpath alongside the Shropshire Union Canal runs to the door of the museum*

*By bus: 20 minutes walk from Ellesmere Port bus station, served by a wide range of services from North Wales, Chester, Liverpool, Neston, Runcorn and Wirral.*

### **Tickets for the conference**

Admission to the museum and conference, including tea/coffee and behind the scenes visit costs £25.00 with savoury lunch, £17.50 without. To book, send a cheque (made out to MIHS), plus a SAE, to the MIHS Treasurer, 14 Ardern Lea, Alvanley, Frodsham, Cheshire WA6 9EQ, Tel 01928 724804.





The remains of the tramway incline can be seen heading down the slope from the site.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT CLEGGSWOOD COLLIERY 2009 (Part 2)

### THE ARCHAEOLOGY

Using documents and maps allows us to get an overview of the mine's history but it does not give us an insight into the mine's day to day operations. Only by carrying out an archaeological excavation would we find out the more intricate details of the mine's operation.

On the initial survey of the surface remains of the inclined tramway were clearly visible and also those of a connecting tramway alignment to the lower western mine. At the top of the incline the remains of a rectangular brick building could be seen.

After some discussion we decided to put the first trench across the tramway alignment to the western lower mine. On removal the covering grass a hard compacted surface was discovered. With the use of our metal detector we found the remains of two iron track spikes but any track work had been removed. We came to the conclusion that the tramway had been reused as a pathway, as this mine was known locally as the "wheelbarrow pit" it seems that the pathway had been made for this purpose.

Our second trench was pit across the lower part of the incline and this proved to be more fruitful as we soon found the imprint of the plate way tracks and were able to ascertain that the gauge had been 2'-6". As we dug down below the initial surface a piece of broken cast iron plate way rail was discovered leading us to the conclusion that the inclined plate way been rebuilt at some stage as the older section had become worn out. As the field in which we were excavating was the residence of two mares complete with foals. We soon became the objects of some equine fascination as we were constantly visited by the field's residents. I'm sure not many archaeologists can say they have had so much of this type of attention.

After making good the first two trenches we shifted our attention to the building remains around the position of the mine's original entrance. As we noted on our original survey the remains of a brick built structure were evident, we speculated at first that this may have been the office building, however as we excavated to expose the walls we started to uncover many pieces of discarded ironwork. After removal of demolition rubble from around the interior and exterior walls we were able to establish the buildings size as being 16' x 12' 4" with the doorway situated at the back facing the hillside. With the amount of ironwork that was uncovered within the buildings interior ( these included iron wedges, hooks and the broken heads of two miners picks together with many other pieces of discarded ironwork ) it was soon realised that we had actually discovered the remains of what had been the blacksmiths shop. The blacksmith was of course an essential at every mine as much iron work was required.

After talking to the landowner ( Dan Taylor ) he very kindly sent up his mechanical excavator and put in two trenches for us, this allowed us to establish the mines drainage system, although at the time we didn't know what the drains were for. As water soon began to run out of the drain at the western end of the trench we soon realised that this was in fact draining the mine entrance although we still have not managed to locate its exact position . (Cont on pg 9)



The site of the smithy

Excavation at the rear of the smithy building exposed a stone built walkway that had been laid between the plate way rails presumably to allow for grip when pushing the tubs to and from the upper eastern mine entrance. Whilst excavating this section we discovered a complete section of cast iron plate way rail which is just under 49" long. It was heavily encrusted in corrosion, however this has now been cleaned off and the rail now resides in my garden shed awaiting display in the future. We discovered that the plate way had connected into the incline at right angles so we believe some sort of turntable must have been employed to turn the tubs, although we have not been able to verify this.

As we excavated the exterior of the buildings western edge ( after cutting back branches from a Hawthorn bush ) an elaborate stone and brick flooring was discovered complete with associated drainage systems. On completion we realised we had found the locations of the boiler and steam engine. After considering the floor area of the boiler house I have come to the conclusion that a vertical boiler must have been installed and a blow down drain had been built. Judging by the size and shape of the floor area of the engine house I think that a small horizontal steam engine must have been used and had been installed on a wooden mount. A drain had been put in to allow for the removal of condensation water from the engines cylinder. How the engine was connected to the endless chain haulage system is as yet unknown.

Examination of a photograph in the society archive showed the position of the mines main entrance although after much excavation we have as yet not discovered its exact location However as there are some large terracotta pipes set vertically still visible this may mark the entrance more clearly.

This has proved to be a most interesting excavation so far and I hope further excavation this year will reveal more of this mines fascinating history.

I would like to thank my fellow diggers ( Peter Schofield, Bernard Pratt and Terry Ryder ) for their ef-

forts and also the land owner ( Mr Dan Taylor ) for allowing us access and for his enthusiasm in our efforts.

David Grayson

Metal finds from the smithy including pick heads.



Holcombe Moor Heritage Group are the latest member of the Federation. Here, Barry Simpson introduces the Group and their aims.

Holcombe Moor lies 15 miles north of Manchester and has been described by experts from Oxford Archaeology North (OAN) as remarkably unspoilt and probably one of the most important historic landscapes in Greater Manchester. Their comments follow a boundary survey carried out by archaeologists and members of the local community that allowed the reconstruction of the training area's landscape prior to 1600. The army first took over the 900 acres in 1912 and since then has used the land for live firing and exercises. Their usage has fossilised many of the historic field boundaries but sadly has resulted in the loss of several medieval and post medieval farm buildings.

However one building does survive, Simon's Sundial Cottage. The building is a Grade II classic example of early Stuart Lancashire vernacular architecture with mullioned windows and the remains of an early sundial which gives the farm its name. Its current owner Defence Estates is working closely with the Holcombe Moor Heritage Group to try and bring it back to life

The building has remained unoccupied for several years and has fallen into a state of disrepair leading to it being placed on The Buildings at Risk Register by English Heritage. Holcombe Moor Heritage Group now wants to bring this historic building back to life for community use. Simons Sundial is close to the Redisher Wood Nature Reserve and National Trust land on Holcombe Moor and could form a focal point for all those who use this unspoilt landscape. A preliminary scheme has been drawn up by a local architect and the estimated costs amount to more than a quarter of a million pounds. The group have already obtained the voluntary services of a professional project manager, an architect and firm of environmental consultants. They are working closely with Defence Estates to ensure the building, once restored, has a viable future.

The Group can be contacted at [enquiries@holcombemoor.org](mailto:enquiries@holcombemoor.org) or at 01204 88 0251.

Barry Simpson

Left: Simon's Sundial Cottage





Trench 1

Excavations at the Rectory (Wigan Hall) site are continuing. Over the last few months our society members have been visiting the site regularly (working at weekends only) and are now beginning to uncover features dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and earlier. Discoveries include a cart track and a water feature.

The old Frog Lane, which was our original target, is still proving to be elusive, but the well-made cart track, lying under the 19<sup>th</sup> century garden path, could well be its forerunner (we suspect that the lane itself was dismantled and removed when the grounds were extended in 1875). The cart track's width (3.5 metres) is too narrow to be the lane which, on the 1847 OS map, is shown to be 7 metres wide. However on the north side of the track, compacted building rubble probably formed the base for the wider Lane. What appears to be a cast-iron drain (or water feature) found in this area may be the only evidence left of the old lane. Sections through the cart track show gullies flanking its edges, presumably to take the run-off rainwater and pottery coming out of them suggest a post-medieval date.

The ground beneath the cart track is compacted sand but shows evidence of disturbance. 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century references suggest the Hall was well defended with a moat, gatehouse and even a draw-bridge. However, whether we will be able to find evidence for any of these features has yet to be seen (more details on our website at

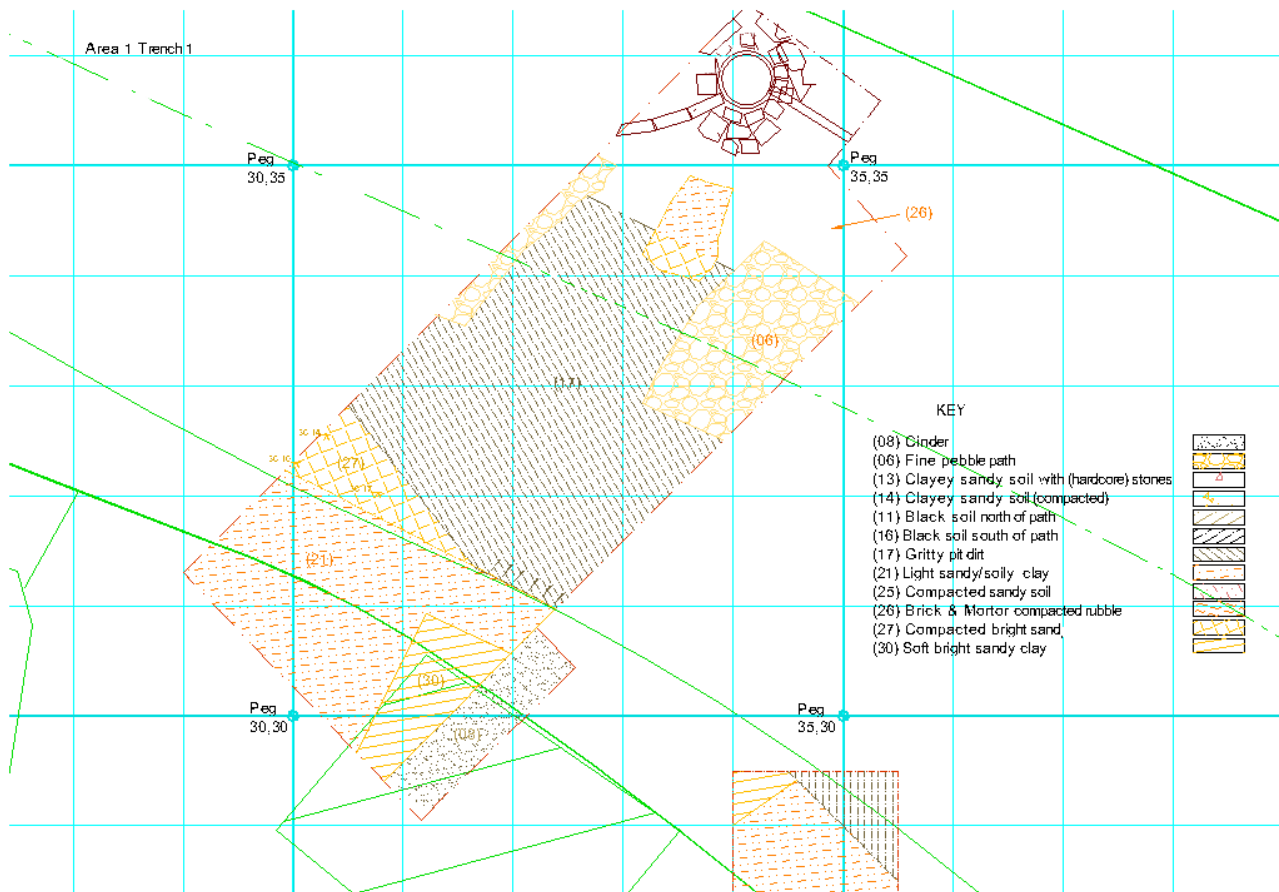
[www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk)

Left: Trench 1 north (Cont on pg 12)



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Site plan



Towards the end of last year, as part of our funding requirements, we were able to arrange for 21 students and 2 teachers from a local A level College (Winstanley) to come down and help us with the project. The weather was good enabling us to carry out a full programme of activities for them.

We split them into three groups and set them about doing height surveying, resistivity surveying and excavating. During the day, the students showed great enthusiasm for our project and a number have returned to carry on excavating with us on our regular weekend site visits.



Bill Aldridge

Winstanley student visit

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## South Trafford Archaeological Group

What would have been quite probably the winning entry in a competition for the oddest find from a medieval moated site, was uncovered at Timperley Old Hall by STAG recently. Like a 'ritual deposit' is another way of describing the remains of most of the front half of a classic car. They were found buried in a pit on the platform. The engine block had the wheels and springs buried with it and the hood placed over the whole. Whether these are all from one vehicle is not yet known. TAS and the Glossop and Longdendale Classic car club have offered to try to identify the parts. Sadly this will have to be done by looking at photographs, such as the one reproduced below, as all of the items were stolen from the site recently.

Peter Leeming



Peter Lange, of both MADASH and CBA North West, as well as TAS, reports on a very successful event in Tameside earlier this year.



Michael Higgins steps into the breach to give a talk about Royton

The Council for British Archaeology North west region (CBANW), hosts two conference type meetings per year. The Spring meeting, which includes the AGM, traditionally bases itself around current archaeology ongoing within the region, and, by allying ourselves with local societies, not only gives a flavour of the workings within that particular area, but also allows the society to advertise themselves and their work to a wider audience. The Autumn meeting is themed, such as a previous event held at Liverpool on slavery, to explore particular aspects of archaeology within a one day event.

In May, we held our Spring meeting/ AGM at Stalybridge Civic Hall, in conjunction with Tameside Archaeological Society (TAS). As ever, we had a range of top speakers, various subjects and an excellent audience. The venue was good, as was the lunch, and, notwithstanding the usual software problems, which we feel are sent by some unknown computer god to plague us, the event was a good one, and we were heartened at the feedback we received.

After an excellent opening by our new Chair, Helen Caffrey, Mike Nevell gave us an overview of twenty years of the Tameside Archaeology Survey. Beginning with the earliest human remains, the Ashton Moss skull c.1000 BC, Mike time travelled us swiftly via the Iron Age, courtesy of the enclosure at Werne Low, to Buckton Castle, which has long been a focus for archaeologists, and is still a major ongoing project, led by Brian Grimsditch.

**(Cont on pg 14)**

The cruck frame buildings of the medieval period, of which many still survive, led nicely to St Lawrence's church, Denton, C. early 1530's, one of only twenty nine surviving timber built churches, and currently the subject of not only a survey, but of Brian's Tameside Graveyards Survey, of which more later. There are also quite a few early 18<sup>th</sup> Century industrial buildings, such as weavers cottages, still in existence, and quite easily spotted once you know what to look for, which nicely led to the Industrial Revolution. The Survey has looked at this period in some detail, with extensive recording over the years. The knowledge that Manchester and its outlying towns and areas led to the events that effectively built our modern world made me feel proud to be associated with Greater Manchester, and I know that the feeling was also held by the members attending.

Our next speaker was Ron Cowell, of University of Liverpool fame. He spoke of a project currently ongoing, which has a certain amount of secrecy and a great deal of physical hardship, on the moors near Stalybridge. The site is of the Late Mesolithic, and has already garnered a great deal of interest, not only for the sheer numbers of flints found, literally in the thousands, but possibly because it may become a nationally, if not internationally, important site. In conjunction with TAS, whose members routinely braved the snow and winds of the moors to excavate, the site has thrown up many discoveries, mysteries and enough material to make various sub projects, such as looking at possible Mesolithic trade links, possible re-use of sites, and an insight into the lives of our distant forebears.

Bryan Sitch of Manchester Museum gave a fascinating retrospective of the recent year long Lindow Man exhibition, which won a Design award while also being innovative and thought provoking. While the exhibition caused some controversy, and was not universally liked for some of its aspects, it engendered some 12,500 visitors comments which the Museum has used to plan for the future. Exhibitions like this, which are deliberately designed to be challenging, can court some negative comments, but also many favourable. Surely it is better for a modern museum to strive to be different, and to attract comment, rather than to put on a bland display which is soon forgotten. Moving on, Bryan's talk concentrated on the proposed new changes within some galleries, namely the Egyptian and the Mediterranean. These are intended to be re-worked into more modern displays, with some changes to the present areas to open up and re-display and re-tell the stories to a modern generation. As a member of the focus group advising on the plans, I can only say that, having seen them, I am excited for the future of what is a major museum within Manchester, both for its displays, educational and research facilities, yet sadly is still little known within the city.

After lunch, a guided walk around Stalybridge by Alan Rose of Stalybridge Historical Society and the AGM, which was well attended despite the above, Brian Grimsditch gave a fascinating talk on the Tameside Graveyards Survey. It is a sad fact that we all have to go sometime, and when our allotted time is up, it would be nice to have a decent burial and hopefully, to be remembered. Brian's project fulfils both criteria, noting burial plots and graveyards, but also, by copying inscriptions, brings to mind the long departed. Giving a somewhat morbid but informative retrospective of human burials from the Neolithic onwards, changes in burial practices, and, perhaps more importantly, in funerary monuments, give a good sense of changing attitudes to death within cultures situated in our own locality. As one who wants to be buried with a computer disk in one hand, and a hand axe in the other, to confuse any future archaeologist who may dig me up, I appreciate the sense of both loss and pride in the individual as revealed by the gravestones.

**(Cont on pg 15)**

One of my lecturers once pointed out that the dead do not bury themselves, so burials often reveal the regard (or lack of) the individual by their family. The Survey itself however, also looks very firmly to the living. Volunteers are sought, who can give their time and energy to the project, but who often may not be able to do physical field archaeology. A few hours a week, or month, spent upon this project, would not only assist Brian, but also bring folk into the field of archaeology



Delegates on the guided walk in Stalybridge.

who perhaps never thought they could participate. The end product of the project is to have a database giving a complete record, including photographic, of each headstone in non municipal graveyards within Tameside. The potential for this is enormous, from family historians to an academic and historical resource for the future.

Our next speaker was rather left in the lurch by his colleagues. Intended to be a two person talk, both parties unfortunately had to cancel, leaving Michael Higgins to talk about Royton Hall. And a good job he made of it too. Using a presentation designed for the Marsh Award, which Royton jointly won, Mike went through the history of Royton Hall, from early drawings to later photographs, including that of its demolition, to excavation of the site. The excavation grew out of Dig Manchester, and enabled the Royton Historical Society to change tack to actual field archaeology. With the assistance of Norman Redhead, County Archaeologist, and volunteers from other societies such as Madash, the Moston and district Archaeology and Social History Society, Royton tackled what was to become a major excavation, with surprises galore. From 2005 to 2009, the dig was always intended to be a community project, with local volunteers and school children welcome. To say it exceeded its expectations is an understatement.

Finally, in our tradition of last but not least, Marie Widger gave a presentation on Mellor. While she was unable to show, due to time constraints, her marvellous film made by local school children on the Iron Age folk response to Roman invaders, she made everyone imagine how they would feel if an invader took over our lands, but tempered matters by bringing higher value and grade items that actually bettered our lives. Possibly very topical in the current climate of Iraq and Afghanistan, but also thought provoking. Marie uses education to explore and question the past in a way that ordinary archaeology cannot. Working primarily with children, Marie uses role play to firstly empathise with, then to understand the historical period. At the end of the day, this is what archaeology is all about.

P. Lange Secretary CBA NW.

Miscellany

The image in the current (no 3) newsletter of Kevin Wright trying out cheap aerial photography on Iron-tongue Hill, brought back memories of Bury Archaeological Group attempts at Whitelow 50 years ago. A helium-filled meteorological balloon (A) was difficult to control, but did produce a shot of the S.W. quadrant at the start of backfilling, showing earthfast stones, and a naughty person sitting on the baulk (B).

A more successful effort at Wind Hill 40 years ago depended on an electronically activated camera attached to a projecting arm supported by a wooden tripod (C), this was more controllable and easily portable.

Norman Tyson  
Bury Archaeological Group

A



B



**Note:**

The Whitelow excavation was published in volume 9 of the *Manchester Archaeological Bulletin*. The site produced rare clay studs, one of which has been nominated as part of the British Museum's "History of the World in 1000 Objects" by Bury Museum. *Editor*

C

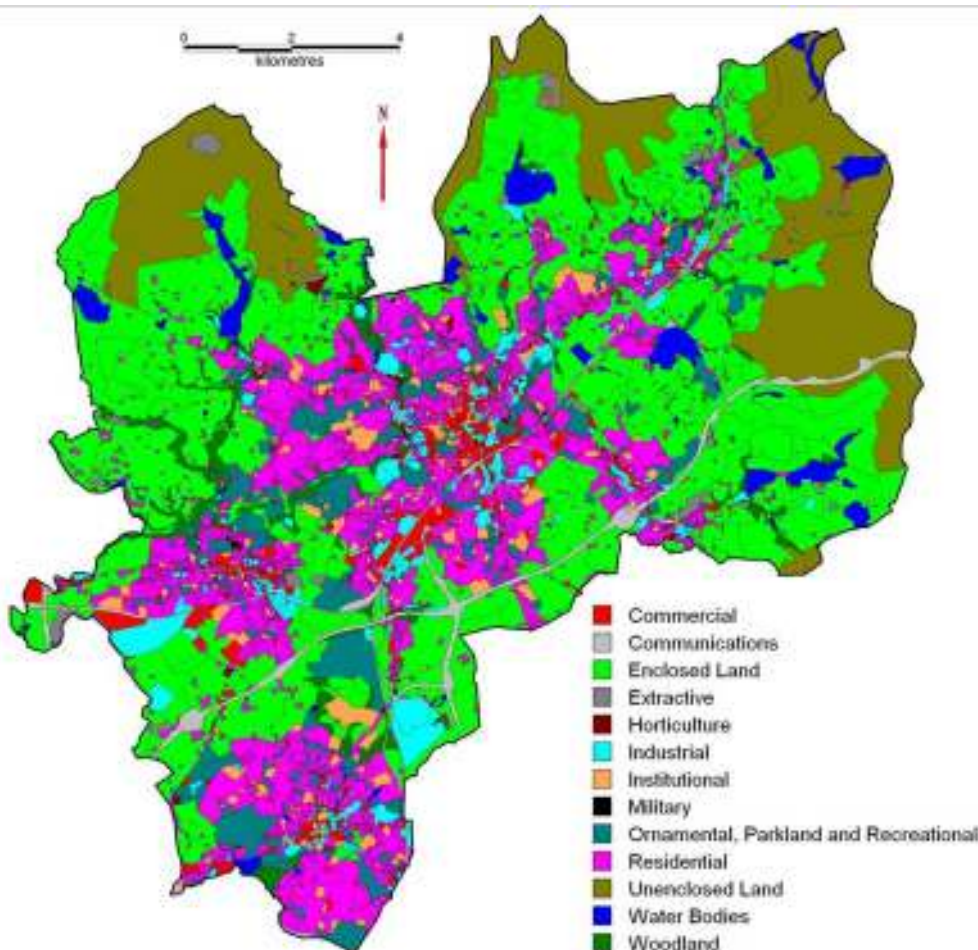
park, on the east side of the ground, has become a lunar landscape of massive spoil heaps and large holes – quite appropriate for the former Bradford Colliery site which boasted Britain’s deepest coal shaft (over 1 mile) and which still retains 350 million tons of coal reserves! OAN have been excavating remains of the winding engine house and boiler house, whilst even closer to the football ground they have recorded a c 1870 regenerative furnace (invented by Siemens) and well preserved set of boiler foundations which formed part of Bradford Iron Works . Sadly, no further remains of the medieval Bradford Old Hall moat survived, to complement those partly excavated by UMAU in 2002. The project has brought back to life a forgotten township of Manchester, famous for its industry and having at one time over 15,000 residents.

Community archaeology continues to thrive in Greater Manchester. The site of 12<sup>th</sup> century Buckton Castle near Mossley has seen a third and last season of exploratory excavation with the help of many volunteers from GM Archaeology Federation societies. Salford University CfAA have been running the dig as part of the Tameside Archaeology Survey. This time, as well as laser scanning the whole site, the opportunity was taken to take oblique aerial photos using a remote control gyrocopter operated by Greg Colley. The results have been impressive (and are shown accompanying the article on pages 1-4). There is much to look forward to this summer and autumn, with SMART and the National Trust running a community dig at Dunham Massey in July, whilst a successful evaluation at the Cheadle Hall site in Cheadle, Stockport, means that it will see a community dig this September as part of the Village Green’s bicentenary celebration (see article on pgs 4-6).. Dig Greater Manchester kicks off in autumn and Pennine Prospects have commenced a large community project across the central Pennine watershed landscape that will see projects in Oldham and Rochdale Boroughs.

GMAU have just completed Rochdale Borough’s Urban Historic Landscape Characterisation, which makes 6 authorities down with 4 to go. The project is mapping the whole of the modern landscape of Greater Manchester, including the 51% of urbanised land. Using GIS polygons linked to an access database, GMAU staff are demonstrating, through geo-rectified historic mapping, how the landscape has evolved over the last 200 years. Around 30,000 polygons have been mapped so far. Funded by English Heritage and AGMA, this will make a significant contribution to Greater Manchester’s Historic Environment Record, which is held and maintained by GMAU. It will provide an important evidence base for spatial planners as they prepare their Local Development Frameworks over the next two years. It is also flagging up potential new conservation areas, as well as buildings, sites and landscapes of archaeological interest.

**Norman Redhead**

**The completed Rochdale HLC**



## Greater Manchester Archaeology Federation

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**The Greater Manchester Archaeology Federation was formed in 2009. It is a loose organization of local archaeology societies from Greater Manchester with affiliated groups from neighbouring counties.**

## News from GMAU

The big news since the last Federation meeting is the publication, on 23<sup>rd</sup> March of the long anticipated Planning Policy Statement on the Historic Environment, promoted to number 5 from its draft number of 15. This thin document of just 12 key policies is supported by a weighty Practice Guide and endorsed by a cross-departmental Government Statement on the Historic Environment. PPG15 (Historic Environment) and PPG16 (Archaeology) are dead and superseded by the new PPS5. This is quite a strange feeling as for 20 years PPG16 has provided the main sustenance for commercial archaeology. However, PPS5 gives more protection to archaeology and integrates it more fully into the wider historic environment, recognising the importance of Historic Environment Records and the potential of archaeological remains. Heritage professionals are still trying to get their heads round the

### The Sports City Collar remediation site reveals its past as Bradford Iron Works



changes in philosophy and terminology, and it will be some time before local planning authorities get to grips with it. GMAU are offering to give workshops to planning colleagues on archaeology best practice in relation to PPS5 and the Government Statement. English Heritage are running workshops round the country. There is more recognition of the role of local communities' input to the plan-

### New publications and reports

Does your society have a new publication or report which you would like to be included in the newsletter? If so contact Peter at GMAU.

ning process and the need to disseminate results of archaeological work to them and even, where appropriate, for them to take part in investigations themselves.

There have been some interesting archaeological excavations in the last two months. One of the highlights was the Sports City Collar remediation site (see above). Manchester City's car

(Cont on pg 17)