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CBA West Midlands

ISSUE 11

WINTER 2010

News from the Past 2011

This year's News From the Past event takes place on February 26th 2011 in The Library Theatre at Birmingham Central Library and will highlight some of the year's most exciting archaeological discoveries from across the region.

This annual event includes presentations about sites and objects from rural and urban parts of the region, ranging in date from prehistoric

to modern times. Talks include news from excavations in Birmingham, Coventry and Martley, Worcestershire, research

into prehistoric Pedmore, the archaeology of Redditch and the Northwick Project as well as the remarkable Roman discoveries from

Kenchester and the newly discovered Villa at Bredons Norton in Worcestershire. There will also be an update from the Conservators working on the Staffordshire Hoard. Booking details can be found on the back page of this newsletter.



Part of the Staffordshire Saxon Hoard. Copyright Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery

Beneath Birmingham's New Library

Excavations on the site of the new Library of Birmingham revealed well-preserved remains of a 19th century brass works. The works manufactured decorative brass objects such as bedsteads and house fittings and later became engaged in metal rolling, gas fitting, and wire manufacture.

Structural evidence of the different phases of boiler and engine bases powering a large brass rolling and wire drawing

mill were found as well as the engine fly wheel pits, rolling



Excavation of a 19th century brassworks in Birmingham

and wire drawing machine bases, boiler flues and chimney, hearths and furnaces. The positions of some of these structures could be identified on historic plans but others were not, such as the furnaces and casting pits. The site was extended in the mid 19th century and the remains of further workshops, working areas and crucible furnaces were investigated. The site was finally levelled in the 1920s.

Profiling Your Committee (Part 2)



Emma Collins
Secretary

CBA West
Midlands

My first interest in archaeology was as a child visiting the many medieval towns and castles of France and I have always been interested in the ancient Egyptians and their 'strange' practices of mummification! During high school I lost my interest slightly as most teenagers do!

BUT, I then did an A-level in Classical Civilisations during which one of my tutors was an archaeologist so he focused on the archaeology of the classical world which really grabbed my interest. I then did an undergraduate degree in archaeology (BA) at the university of Birmingham from 2002-2005, and then straight on to a Masters in Practical Archaeology also at the University of Birmingham. I initially wanted to be an Egyptologist but then became interested in Prehistory.

My university training excavations were all on prehistoric sites that were part of the Wolvey projects, directed by Paul Garwood, and during my final excavation we discovered a beautiful little prehistoric food vessel near the top of a round barrow which sparked my interest in pottery. I then wrote my masters dissertation on this food vessel.

In 2007 I started work for Birmingham Archaeology, as a Site Assistant. My first site was again, a prehistoric site, but this time in Wales rather than the West Midlands at a place called Llanymynech, where I was lucky enough to excavate a Collard urn containing a cremation.

I have really enjoyed the varied life of an archaeologist – one week working on a cotton mill in Droylsden, Greater Manchester, then

Longstanton, Cambridgeshire. Another major site I really enjoyed was St John Street Coventry in 2008 where the site was extremely rich in finds including a jet crucifix, beads, spoons, wooden bowl, bone flute, a gold ring and vast amounts of medieval and post medieval pottery, my real passion for pottery seriously started then!

More often than not now I am to be found in the Finds Room. But my long-term career plan is to become a medieval and later pottery specialist. I hope to achieve this initially by carrying on as a site assistant and increasing my knowledge of pottery though reading books, attending conferences and talking to other specialists.

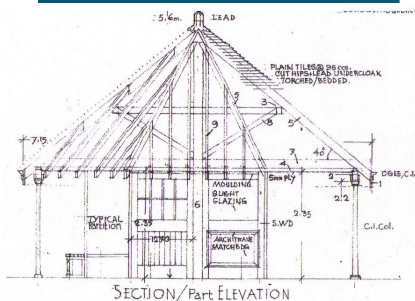
Emma Collins
CBAWM Secretary

Avoncroft Museum Building Rescue

Avoncroft Museum is embarking on a major new project to save an octagonal cast iron airing court shelter from the site of Barnsley Hall Hospital in Bromsgrove. From 1907 Barnsley Hall was a psychiatric hospital made up of administration blocks, a recreation hall, stores, workshops, stables a chapel and six distinct

wards. The grounds of the hospital were laid out in six 'airing courts' with paths and flower beds with a shelter located in each of the six areas where patients could sit to take the air. At it's peak the hospital was treating about 1200 patients. The hospital closed in 1996 and over the last decade many buildings have been

demolished and the area redeveloped but the airing court shelter was retained. Sadly, over recent years the structure has been subject to increasing neglect and vandalism. Avoncroft took the decision to begin fundraising and planning for it's long term preservation in 2009 and now hopes to relocate the shelter to its Bromsgrove site.



Barnsley Hall Airing Court Shelter

Mick Aston on the Northwick Trail!

As you may have read in previous issues, in 2008 the Worcestershire Young Archaeologists Club was awarded just under £50,000 for a project in north Worcester, which aimed to engage and inspire local people of all ages through the historic and natural environment of Northwick and Bevere. This was to be achieved through a wide variety of events, workshops and talks in partnership with organisations such as Worcester City Council (Archaeology, Parks, Museums), Worcestershire County Council (Archaeology, Record Office, Countryside Access), University of Worcester and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. The Northwick Manor Community Heritage Project drew to a close in May with a Medieval May Day



Northwick Manor Heritage Trail

festival, complete with sword fighting and archery, re-enactors, and a large marquee full of activities, information and cake. Professor Mick Aston joined us, resplendent in multicoloured stripes (and his very own bright orange WYAC t-shirt) to cut the ribbon and launch the Northwick Manor Heritage Trail. The trail is a 5km circular walk along existing rights of way and is the culmina-

tion of research by Worcestershire's Young Archaeologists and local people, supported by professional archaeologists from Worcester City Council's Archaeology Section and Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service. Full details and trail leaflets are available at www.wyac.co.uk/northwick.

The project was formally recognised for 'excellence in joint working' at the first Worcestershire Local Compact Awards in November. Our

Young Archaeologists were very proud to receive their certificate and look forward to the next big project!



Time Team's Mick Aston at the opening of the Northwick Manor Heritage Trail in Worcester



Unearthing the Saltley Brick Industry

Saltley had a rural appearance until the 19th century when rapid residential and industrial development took place. The industries included the Manufacture of bricks using local clay as a raw material. One of the many brick kilns in this area was excavated as part of redevelopment. It was part of a small brickworks marked on the Ordnance Survey map of 1890 which consisted of two kilns, a drying shed and a clay pit and was disused by about 1900. The kiln was roughly

rectangular, 10m long and 5m wide, with flues along the walls to allow heat to circulate and openings at both ends for the bricks to be loaded and unloaded.

The subsoil under the kiln had been baked hard and discoloured to an orange colour through heat action. The kiln was a "Scotch" type. It would have been open-topped and have had no permanent roof structure. It was loaded with bricks for firing with loose, burnt bricks covering them and

temporary blocking walls across the ends. The kiln would have been fired for six days in all, first of all at a slow heat to drive off moisture and then to a maximum temperature of about 1100 degrees Centigrade.



Couchman Road Brick Kiln in Saltley, Birmingham

Dates for your Diary



Winter Tours of Blakesley Hall

1st and 15th February and 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th March at 11am
Guided tour of the Hall.
£3.50 per person.

Pre-booking essential. Tel. 01214642193

Winter Tours of Sarehole Mill

3rd and 10th February and 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st March

Guided tour of the Mill at 1pm £3.50 per person. Pre-booking essential. Tel-0121 777 6612

Weoley Castle Walk and Talk

4th February and 4th March at 2pm

Slideshow/talk followed by a guided tour of the ruins. £3.50 per person.

Pre-booking essential. Tel. 01214642193

Museum Collections Centre Tours, Nechells, Birmingham

Free tours of the Museum Collections Centre take place at 11am

and 2pm on the last Friday of every month. Booking required.

AIA/CBA Regional Dayschool

The final AIA/CBA regional dayschool in the current programme on industrial heritage will be on 21 February 2011 at the Maritime Museum in Lancaster.

CBA Winter General Meeting 2011 Archaeology & the Voluntary Sector

Mon 7 March, British Academy, London
The business meeting will form part of a day which will focus on how local groups can play a crucial role in looking

after the UK's archaeological heritage, with presentations and discussion.

Fortifications at Risk

8th & 9th March 2011

A symposium at the National Army Museum, London by The Fortress Study Group (FSG) to highlight concern at the number of 19th and 20th century fortifications, particularly WW1 and WW2 defences, that have become derelict or have been destroyed. For more information contact Bill Clements at Chair,

Tel 02072865512 or email

chairman@fsgfort.com

TORM Re-enactors Market

11th-15th March

Ryton on Dunsmore Leisure Centre, Warwickshire

£5 Entrance Fee

News from the Past Booking Form

The Latest Archaeological Discoveries in the West Midlands

Saturday 26 February 2011, 10.00am - 4.45pm

Fee: CBA members £15.00 Non-CBA members £20.00

Join CBA West Midlands today for £10 and get the member's discount for this event (total to pay £25.00). Membership also includes a copy of West Midlands Archaeology, regular newsletters and other events. Full details on our website at http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbawm/how_to_join.php

No. of places - CBA members: Non-members:

CBA West Midlands Membership @ £10:

Total Amount Payable:

Please make your cheque payable to "CBA West Midlands"

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr

Surname: Forename:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel (day): Tel (evening):

Email address:

Please return your completed enrolment form to:

Caroline Mosley
CBA West Midlands
c/o 84 Grosvenor Road
Harbourne
Birmingham
B17 9AN

Telephone Contact: 0778 894 1059. Email Contact: nfp.cbawm@gmail.com

Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope if you require a map or receipt

Data Protection Act: The names and addresses of people attending our events are held on a computerised mailing list which will be used to send you information.

Please let us know if you wish your name to be removed

or change your name and/or address (please remember to quote your previous name/address).

Venue: The Library Theatre, Birmingham Central Library B3 3HQ

Fee: CBA members £15.00 Non-CBA members £20.00 (refreshments but no lunch provided).

This annual event organised by the Council for British Archaeology West Midlands, includes illustrated presentations about sites and objects from rural and urban parts of the region, ranging in date from prehistoric to modern times. Talks this year include excavations in West Midlands towns and cities and more on the remarkable Staffordshire Hoard, excavated in 2009.

Programme:

10.00am Welcome and introduction: Chris Patrick, Coventry City Council
The timings and order of individual presentations will be confirmed at a later date

- Recent archaeological work in Birmingham - Mike Hodder, Birmingham City Council
- Prehistoric Pedmore - John Hemmingway, Dudley Metropolitan Council
- The Staffordshire Hoard one year on and its conservation - Deborah Cane, Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery
- Archaeology of Redditch - Emma Hancock, Worcestershire Historic Environment & Archaeology Service
- Excavation in the suburbs of Roman Kenchester - Jon Webster, Worcestershire Historic Environment & Archaeology Service
- The Roman Villa at Bredon's Norton - Stuart Foreman, Oxford Archaeology
- Saving the spooky house in the woods, building recording and excavation in Martley - Mike Napthan, Mike Napthan Archaeology
- Excavations at Parkside, Coventry - Bryn Gethin, Warwickshire Museum Service
- Launch of West Midlands Archaeological Research Framework
- The Northwick Manor Community Heritage Project - Sheena Payne-Lunn, Worcester City Council

There will be a refreshment break in the morning and in the afternoon.

A lunch break will take place between 1.00pm - 1.50pm.

The Library Theatre closes at 5.00pm.

Early application is advised