



The last few months have been busy as SWAAG prepares for the next excavation at The Hagg, which starts on Wednesday 5th July. The group has been fortunate to receive a grant of £9,500 from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority's Sustainable Development Fund. This has enabled running costs to be covered and professional expertise employed. There has been a tremendous response to the request for volunteers to help on the dig and there is now a waiting list for all the days.

On Saturday 24th June, Philip Bastow, the project manager, gave a presentation on The Hagg, in Reeth Memorial Hall. Other SWAAG members were present to answer questions. There was an opportunity to see what had been achieved in previous years and to examine some of the finds.



Even if you are unable to join the dig, why not follow the developments on SWAAG's twitter account: @archaeology_s? You can also follow the Twitter feed on the SWAAG website.

Would you like to be become SWAAG's archivist?

One of last things to happen after an Archaeological excavation has finished, the reports have been written and all the presentations made, is the deposition of the archive.

This ensures that the results of all that frenetic activity are preserved and future generations can access our work and perhaps refer to and build on it as part of their own investigations.

Archiving is important. Analytical techniques change over time, interpretations vary, and whilst we don't immediately imagine that the results of the SWAAG archives will fundamentally change the archaeological record, we do need to ensure our efforts are recognised and recorded.



What is the archive?

The archive consists of everything generated in relation to the excavation. From the initial project plan through the excavation records, context sheets, drawn plans, finds, post excavation analyses, specialist reports, photographs/images and pretty much everything that you can think of relating to what was done or found on site.

What does the role of the SWAAG Archivist involve?

Well, it will start with talking to our local museums.

In our area both the Richmond Museum and the Dales Countryside Museum in Hawes are "Accredited Museums" which means that they accept Archaeological archives. We already have details of their archiving specifications but as each Museum has different requirements you will need to assess and liaise with them so that we can decide which might be best for SWAAG.

Once we have identified a suitable destination for the archive then the work involves ensuring that all the finds, documents and images we are going to deposit are appropriately ordered, catalogued, labelled and boxed in accordance with the destination museum specifications.

Is it for me?

We realise that not everyone wants to be involved in digging and so this will give you a unique insight into the excavation, its findings and records without actually having to go and get muddy.

There are no special skills required, other than perhaps an eye for detail, and so if you are interested in becoming the SWAAG archivist then we would love to hear from you.

For an initial no strings, no commitment, chat over a coffee - please contact me at rob@swaag.org

Rob Nicholson

Visits

In April there was another opportunity for members to attend a pottery workshop, at Pre-Construct Archaeology in Durham. This was run by Roman pottery specialist Eniko Hudak. Later in the month members had a guided tour of the English Heritage Archaeology Store at Helmsley. This fascinating place holds archaeological collections not normally on display to the public.



Cringley Hill area walk

Sunday 9th April was a sunny and clear, spring day, when 13 of us set off from the Clay Intake Nook, on the Tan Hill Road to explore the area around Cringley Hill. The walk was ably led by John Russell with back-up from Mike Walton and me.

John explained how, over the Pleistocene and Holocene periods of the past 20,000 years, the land had altered in response climatic changes and human influences. He showed us the layer of light coloured Loess, a wind-blown silt laid down some 12 to 13,000 years ago, when winds blew the silt from Ireland during a short ice age in the Pleistocene.



The area around Cringley Hill is typical open moorland but that has not always been so: in the Mesolithic period it was hunting ground, open grassland and trees. But then came Neolithic man, the farmer, and the clearance of the land and the burning of the trees, which over the Bronze and Iron Ages, began to turn the land into a more acidic environment; peat and mosses began to take over creating the open moorland landscape we see today.



Of man there was little to see today as it is all now hidden by the heather, grasses and reeds. Fortunately, we had a copy of Tim Laurie's survey map of the ancient landscape, (part of his Swaledale Land Boundaries Project) work, and were able to look over toward Barney Beck and could see where the extensive handiwork of those early settlers, their walls, enclosures and cairns, could be found.

After lunch at Cringley Hill we inspected two limekilns. The earlier and smaller one was in good condition and had probably been used to produce lime for field dressing. The other kiln was probably later and larger and used for the production of lime for industrial rather than agricultural use.

Our return route took us down Foregill valley and past the Foregill lead mine and its large spoil heap. There was much interest and speculation along this section of the route as there were clearly walls and bumps indicative of early occupation and working along the valley. The footpath took us back to the Tan Hill road and a short uphill walk (at the end of the walk, someone exclaimed!) back to the car park.



A great day out.

D. B.

Cumbrian archaeology



This action-packed day began in Penrith. Our little convoy of cars set off at speed from Cranston's Food Hall, to follow Emma Watson into the wilds of Cumbria. Emma is currently working on her PhD, at Durham University, and following her talk in February, had offered to give SWAAG members a guided tour of some of the Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in the Shap area.

Our first halt on this whistle-stop tour was just south of Penrith, at Eamont Bridge. Here we visited

King Arthur's Round Table and Mayburgh (see above), which are both henge monuments, dating back to around to the Late Neolithic, around 3000BC. We then headed south, along the A6, to view Trainford Brow cairn, a long barrow, which measures 104 metres in length and 24 metres in width. It has an east – west alignment, which suggests that it may have been linked to other prehistoric monuments on Askham Fell.

After a somewhat chilly picnic, we visited the Gunnerkeld stone circle. This is an impressive, concentric, late Neolithic circle which encloses a low mound. It's sited on a slight ridge, within a broader valley, which today is right next to the M6 motorway. Today 21 stones remain in the outer



circle and 31 stones in the inner circle. The stones are all Gritstones or Shap Pink Granite (see to left).

We then headed up onto the moors above Shap, passing the Castlehowe stone circle on our way to a further concentric stone circle at Oddendale (see below). This is situated close to another circle, which excavation revealed to have been of timber

construction. This whole moorland area has a rich prehistoric past. There are also two Early Bronze Age barrows, which we visited, on the summit at Iron Hills.



Much of the prehistoric landscape, in this corner of Cumbria, has been damaged over the last three centuries. One of the henge monuments at Eamont Bridge is bisected by a road and it's known from historic records that three out of the four standing stones have vanished from the Mayburgh henge. One of the Iron Hill barrows has a wall running over the top (see below) and another site, which we observed from the A6, is truncated by the London to Carlisle railway line.

The worst damage was apparent at our penultimate site – the Shap stone circle. William Camden in the 16th century and William Stukeley in the 18th century, both reported an avenue of large standing stones, running from the Skellaw Hill Early Bronze Age round barrow towards and past the Kemp Howe stone circle. Apart from the occasional isolated monolith this avenue no longer exists. At the time of enclosure acts in the 19th century most of the stones were removed from the fields and a number are to be seen today in heaps or in the dry stone walls.



Our last visit of the day was to the Gamelands stone circle, near Orton. This was a large circle of 33 Shap Pink Granite erratics measuring 37 - 44 metres across. As with all the other monuments visited today its original purpose and relationship to other monuments in the local landscape can only be guessed at.

Many thanks to Emma for an amazingly informative day.

J. H.

Could you lead SWAAG's walks?



Walks...Grinton smelt mill; Swinnergill; Cringley Bottom; Ingleton's waterfalls; the Norber erratics; Castle Dykes Henge; Barningham Moor; Bronze Age and Iron Age Settlements; cairns and barrows; burnt mounds; even a Stationary Walk...the list goes on and on. Those are just a few of the many walks which SWAAG has offered over the past years. However, they are not walks just to view the scenery of the dales, spectacular as it is, they are more gentle strolls designed to stimulate and educate: geology, archaeology, social history, botany, almost anything. But most importantly they are without exception an experience to be enjoyed.

Walks are, and always have been, a key activity in SWAAG. It is through walking the dales with knowledgeable SWAAG guides that I suspect many of us have developed a deeper knowledge of and affinity for the dales. SWAAG also shares its knowledge and passion for the dales with the public; we have for some years taken out 5 very popular guided walks for the Swaledale Festival; we have taken out members of the National Park, U3A, schools, YACs and members of the public.

If you have enjoyed the SWAAG walks, and would like to do more, please let me know. Also, let me know if you have any specific ideas of walks that you know and would like to share with SWAAG.

However, to sustain a regular programme of varied and interesting walks requires a strong commitment from those members of SWAAG willing to develop and lead walks. If you are prepared to help, to lead walks and to assist in the organisation of walks, please get in touch: david@swaag.org

Dave Brooks

Local History Group

Local history group members continue to research into various aspects of the dale. Judith Mills reported on the transcription of the manorial records. Books A to F are already on the SWAAG website, but there are still plenty more to complete. If anyone is interested in helping with this project all offers will be gratefully accepted! Training will be given.

Perry Gardner reported on his examination of field systems around The Hagg, where he had identified a sequence of fields from the Bronze Age to the 1770 Enclosure Act. Will Swales talked about the problems and pitfalls of interpreting field names, focussing on this occasion on those containing the name 'Cavel' and 'Wham'.

Richard Hunt continues his research into vernacular architecture in Swaledale. He is currently researching beehive bread ovens. If anyone knows of such an oven in any property in the dale or has information about their date, use or development, please let Richard know. Emails sent to jane@swaag.org will be forwarded. Richard is also interested information surrounding the names of any features in Swaledale that suggest defence or conflict e.g. Bloody Vale, Gallows Top.



Alan Mills concluded the meeting by talking about his analysis of medieval tax returns. He is hoping to be able to isolate the economic impact of the Great Famine of 1415-1422 and the Scottish raids following the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314.

It was decided that future meetings will be held twice or thrice a year. The next meeting will be held on Thursday 12th October at the slightly earlier time of 4 o'clock.

SWAAG Members' Meetings

Once again there has been a full programme of talks. In April our speaker was Dr Janet Montgomery, Reader in the department of Archaeology, at Durham University. Her doctoral thesis, in 2002, was the first study to apply combined radiogenic lead and strontium isotope analysis to human archaeological remains in Britain. If you missed this fascinating talk her monograph on The Gristhorpe Man is on the SWAAG website under publications.

In May SWAAG member Rod Flint spoke about the 'Harrying of the North'. This took place in the winter of 1069-70, when William the Conqueror crushed the opposition to his rule, in the north of England. In a series of campaigns his armies massacred the population and destroyed settlements,

crops and livestock. Destitution and starvation followed and any remaining opposition was marginalised to the upland areas. By the time of the Domesday Book, in 1086, much of Swaledale was recorded as 'waste', although what this term meant at the time is debatable. Rod is writing a trilogy of novels set in this period. The novel 'Year 1070: Survival' is already available as a paperback or to download to e-reader.

At June's meeting Philip Bastow spoke briefly about the preparations for the dig at The Hagg. John Russell then explained how geology and palaeontology might be of use to the archaeologist. He concluded with a light-hearted quiz entitled 'John's Porky Pies Quiz,' in which all the 'facts' turned out to be false!

Future dates

Please see the details of forthcoming events below.

The next newsletter

The newsletter relies on contributions from members so if you would like to contribute a photograph or short article about a walk, talk or event please contact me at: jane@swaag.org. Future events, of interest to members, could also be publicised. The next newsletter will be issued in October.

Jane Harrison

DATE(s)	TIME	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	DETAILS	CONTACT
11-07-2017	7pm	The Buck Hotel, Reeth	Members' meeting; informal social	This will be during the Hagg dig. Meet for a pint and an informal chat at The Buck. A chance for non-diggers to catch up with news from the dig site. Expect some interesting finds and a lot of speculation.	
05-07-2017 to 19-07-2017	all day	The Hagg	SWAAG archaeological dig		andrea@swaag.org
19-09-2017	7pm	The Buck Hotel, Reeth	Members' meeting. (Free to members. Guests and visitors will be asked for a voluntary donation.)	Feedback from the dig on The Hagg	
10-10-2017	7pm	CB Inn, Arkengarthdale	Members' Social	Dinner	Shirley@swaag.org
14-11-2017	7pm	The Buck Hotel, Reeth	Members' meeting (Free to members. Guests and visitors will be asked for a voluntary donation.)	Peter Denison-Edson will talk about Romans. (Details tbc)	Sue@swaag.org
09-12-2017	7pm	Tenant's, Leyburn	Xmas Dinner	Bookings will be taken nearer the time	Shirley@swaag.org