



Nottinghamshire
County Council

Nottinghamshire Community Archaeology Newsletter

Spring - Summer 2006 - Issue 4

Welcome to issue four of the Nottinghamshire Community Archaeology Newsletter. This is a special National Archaeology Week issue, giving details of events that will be held across the county between the 15th and 23rd July. We will introduce you to an enthusiastic amateur archaeologist setting his sights upon building an authentic reconstruction of an Iron Age roundhouse in Calverton. We also bring you an update on the work at Moor Pond Wood in Papplewick, results of a community excavation at Gringley on the Hill, and we give you the chance to design our logo.

A Place to Call Home

Meet Grahame Watson. At Woodview Farm just outside the village of Calverton he is recreating a life-size Iron Age roundhouse. When completed the roundhouse will measure 30ft in diameter and stand 18 feet high.

The Iron Age in England lasted from around 750BC up to when the Romans invaded in 43AD, and roundhouses were the domestic dwellings of the time. Out of an obsession for discovering how things were made in the past, Grahame is determined that his roundhouse will be as authentic and as true to the building techniques of the day as possible.

All the wood has been gathered from local sources, using species which would have been readily available in the Iron Age;

“We have used ash, oak, hazel and willow. The oak has come from Sherwood Forest, around the Major Oak; the ash and hazel has come from the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust reserves at Retford; The willow was grown at Bilsthorpe”.

The walls are going to be constructed from willow-hurdle wattle, and will be coated with daub. His daub mixture consists of; “2 parts sandy soil, 1 part horse manure, with a dash of horse hair, and hay or straw, all mixed together and then put on to the wattle”. He refined his recipe by trial and error.

In order to begin the project Grahame undertook a large



amount of research; visiting other sites, background reading, and looking at archaeological floor plans of Iron Age roundhouses. This attention to detail comes from a desire to make the final outcome as authentic as possible.

“It has to be structurally sound, but at the same time it hasn’t got to be too modern otherwise you are compromising its value”. With this in mind, as well as the timbers being from local sources, the reconstruction techniques themselves are following authentic methods.

All the timbers had the bark stripped by a blade, were cut using hand tools, and pegged together with wooden pegs. Once the roof is in place it will be thatched by Grahame himself, a task he estimates could take 90 days.

When the roundhouse is complete Grahame plans to use it as a site for experimental archaeology. “I want to carry out numerous different things such as iron ore smelting, bronze working, making and firing pots, the list is endless as to the different things you could do in this environment”.

He is also keen to involve the local community. “It would be good for school parties to look around, it will be a chance for them to see it, smell it, to interact with it, and for it to be an all round experience, not just something on a blackboard.”.

It is hoped that the project will be finished by December.

The Roundhouse will open to the public - see inside.

National Archaeology Week

National Archaeology Week runs from 15th to 23rd July 2006. It is an annual opportunity for people to find out about the archaeology of their local area or region, coordinated by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). This year we have arranged a comprehensive programme of events and activities for people of all ages to get involved in.

15th July, Saturday – 16th July, Sunday

**Open Days: Moor Pond Wood historic mill system
Moor Pond Wood, Papplewick**

Join the Moor Pond Wood Project as the group open up their significant mill system to the public. They have been involved in archaeological investigation and conservation work for several years. Come along and see the work they have been doing. Guided tours throughout the day and a display on the site. Parking at Village Hall. For further details see the CBA website closer to the date.



16th July, Sunday

**Family Archaeology Day and Finds Roadshow
Sherwood Forest Country Park, 11am - 4pm**

Join the Nottinghamshire Community Archaeologists and HLF funded Sherwood Initiative as they celebrate the start of National Archaeology Week. There will be a range of archaeological activities for children, guided walks around the archaeology of the park, and the county's Finds Liaison Officer will be on hand to identify things you may have found. Free event, but a car parking fee of £3 applies.



17th July, Monday

**Half Day Conference: Mediaeval Nottinghamshire
Assembly Hall, County Hall, West Bridgford,
1pm – 5pm**

A series of short lectures on topics based around the theme of mediaeval Nottinghamshire. Talks will feature Nottinghamshire castles, the battle of East Stoke, and more. Free conference, but booking is necessary.

18th July, Tuesday

**An Introduction to Archaeological Features in the
Landscape:**

Sherwood Forest Country Park, 9.30am - 4pm

Training Day. Aimed at giving a broad introduction to the discipline of landscape archaeology. It will help you to recognise and record archaeological features in the landscape.

Open to all, but not advisable for young children. Tea and coffee provided. Spaces are limited, booking is essential.

19th July, Wednesday

Bantycok Excavation Open Day

Open Day at the developer-funded Bantycok Excavation near Newark. Details to be announced on the CBA website at the end of June.

21st July, Friday

Guided Tours of Mediaeval Rufford

Rufford Country Park, 11.30am, 1.30pm, 3.30pm

Join James Wright of Nottinghamshire County Council for a guided walk exploring Rufford's mediaeval remains. The tour will be given three times during the day, and each tour will last approximately 1 hour.

22nd July, Saturday

Iron Age Roundhouse; Open Day

Woodview Farm, Calverton 10am – 4pm

Come and see Grahame's Iron Age Roundhouse in the process of construction, featured in this issue of the newsletter. See how far work has progressed on the project. Come along and learn about the history and technology. Woodview Farm is on Mansfield Lane to the north of the village.



22nd July, Saturday

Warsop Lordship Boundary Walk

Meet at Budby Pumping Station, Netherfield Lane

9.30am - 12.30pm

Join the Friends of Thynghowe Heritage Project on a walk around the Lordship boundary of Warsop, following the route marked in an historic document from 1816. Take a step back in time and look at some of the archaeological remains and boundary features on this perambulation walk. Please wear sturdy shoes and suitable clothing.

23rd July, Sunday

Ancient Arts Festival

Sherwood Forest Country Park 11am - 4pm

A day of demonstrations and activities for people of all ages, based around the crafts and technologies of our ancestors. Mediaeval arms and armour, weaving, stone masonry, and more. We also pay tribute to the famous local antiquarian Major Hayman Rooke, for whom the Major Oak was named, in the bicentennial of his death. Arranged by Nottinghamshire County Council and the HLF funded Sherwood Initiative. Free event but a parking charge of £3 applies.

Some of the events have limited places and you will need to book in advance. To book places please get in touch using the contact details on the rear of the newsletter.

For more details please visit the CBA Website for National Archaeology Week at www.britarch.ac.uk/naw

Here you will find the list of events taking place across the country. If you are on holiday during National Archaeology Week, why not check out local events?

Design a Logo!

Do you have a flair for the artistic? Nottinghamshire Community Archaeology (NCA) are looking for ideas for a logo and we'd like you to design it. **Send your ideas to the address on the back of the newsletter.**

All Change

There has been a little bit of a change at Nottinghamshire Community Archaeology. In April this year Cathy Block left us for pastures new with Derbyshire County Council. We wish her the very best of luck in her new position.

In the meantime we welcome Andy Gaunt to the team. Andy has a background in geography, geology, archaeology, and mapping. He has a keen interest in the reconstruction of ancient technologies, and is learning how to knap flint.

Deep Dark Mysteries at Moor Pond Wood



The Friends of Moor Pond Wood have been involved in an extensive programme of work at the abandoned mill site in Papplewick. The archaeological investigations have been continuing with test-pitting across the site. Some time ago the society were aware they had a deep brick-lined shaft on the site, but couldn't establish a safe way of clearing it out so that they could get a closer look. Until now...

Assisted by the Leen Valley Conservation Volunteers they were able to clear out the shaft to reveal long-forgotten brick and stone work. It was hoped that clearing out the shaft would answer some of the questions about how water moved around on the site. It has helped with our understanding, but in turn has raised even more questions. The investigations continue.

The site will be open to the public on 15th and 16th July as part of National Archaeology Week. More information is available at www.papplewick.org/

Digging Gringley

In May we joined members of the community at Gringley on the Hill to help them investigate a piece of their industrial heritage. Gringley Wharf is a small patch of land next to the Chesterfield Canal. The Parish Council, which owns the site, have won a grant from the County Council's Building Better Communities Scheme (BBC), to develop it into a canal side picnic area, and our purpose was to help them explore what might be left of its canal heritage.

The canal opened in 1777, and rapidly transformed this part of the County. The soils of Gringley were found to be perfect for brick, tile and pantile making, and the canal provided an excellent means of transport. Over the next 150 years brickworks and other industries were built here, and for a while they flourished. During the heyday of the Canal, the wharf played an important part in the life of the village, with a wide variety of goods arriving and leaving from the

site. Within living memory there were at least two working boats based there, one operated by John Oliver and the other by John Smith. Over the canal from the Wharf was a public house, now demolished, run by one John Barrowcliffe, who also ran a coal delivery service from the Wharf which supplied the village, and possibly some of the local brickworks.

Old maps provide additional information about the industrial archaeology of the area. The Ordnance Survey first edition map clearly depicts a canal-side brickyard less than 250m west of the wharf, while the Walkeringham Brick-



works, famous for their high quality bricks and pantiles, were located less than 400m to the east. The same map clearly shows a small building in one corner of Gringley Wharf. This structure, and any signs of hard surfaces, were our targets for investigation.

An archaeological dig was scheduled, and volunteers were sought from the community. The response was excellent, with a large number of people braving what turned out to be a very wet weekend. Four trenches were opened. The topsoil seemed to be mostly material dredged from the canal; beneath this there was a rough surface which was covered in coal debris. Unfortunately we did not find any

trace of the building on the map, although we did find a large dump of modern bricks, and a wealth of Victorian pottery. One more weekend of work is proposed, but we also intend to investigate the industrial history of the parish as a whole.

Cockglode Wood

Cockglode Wood, located off the Ollerton roundabout between the A616 and the A6075, is more than you might imagine at first glance. Here stood Cockglode House, a substantial country house that dated from at least the eighteenth century. This house was demolished in the last century to make way for the spoil heap from the pit at Edwinstowe. The area, now a mix of heath and woodland, is a designated Local Nature Reserve, and is jointly managed by the Sherwood Forest Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council. As part of the ongoing conservation work taking place there the Nottinghamshire Community Archaeologists were asked to examine the site for archaeological remains. A brief walkover of the site suggests that, although there is nothing remaining of Cockglode House itself, there may well be garden features surviving. There is also a much older, possibly Mediaeval, ditch which runs in association with stumps of veteran oaks.

It is hoped that it will be possible for the area to be subject to walkover survey by archaeologists and volunteers sometime in the near future.

If you are interested in joining any of the projects currently underway, or have ideas for projects in your local area, please get in touch with us.

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