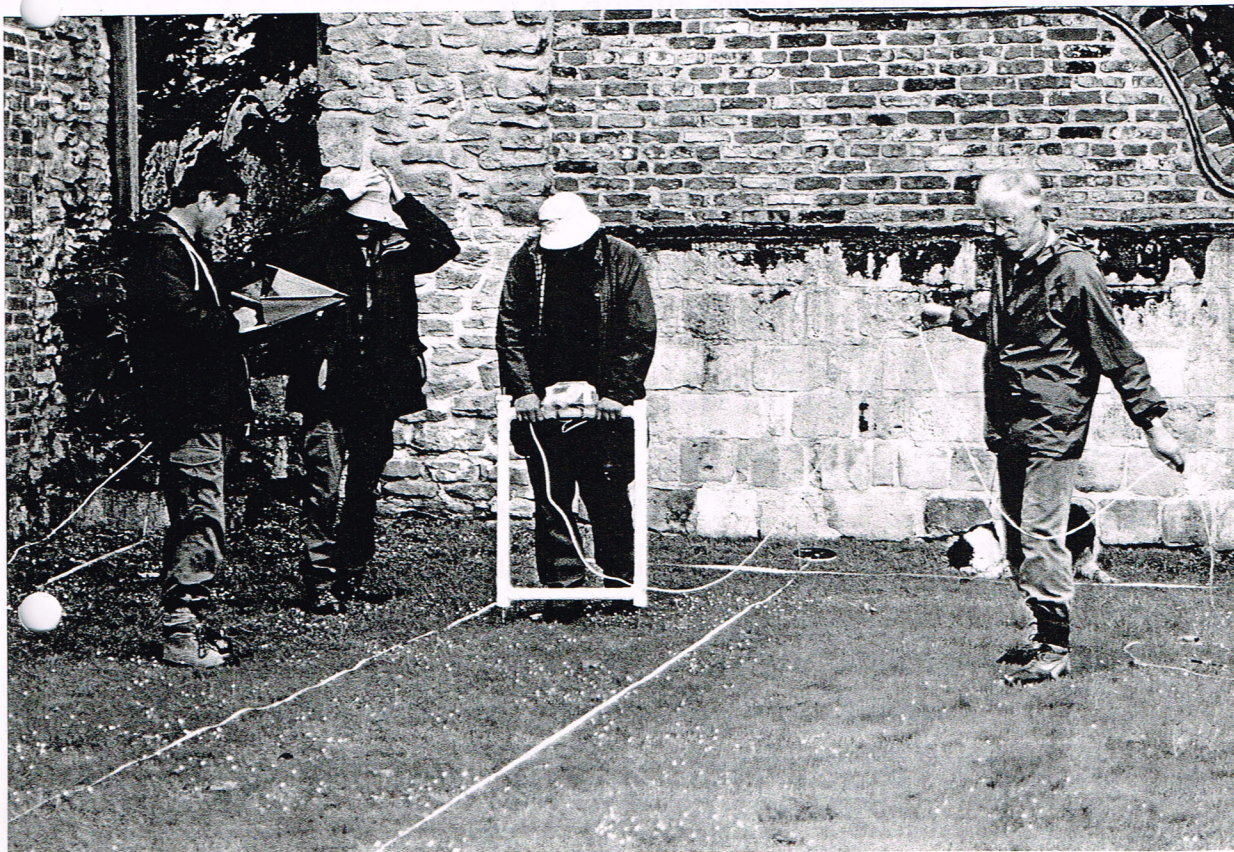


THE PONTEFRACT AND DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 39 SUMMER 2000. FINAL ISSUE OF THE CENTURY.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY AT HOWDEN IS SUCCESSFUL



Members Allen Powell, Dan Ferguson, David Hedges and David Wilcox at work in the Minster environs at Howden. (See story inside)

An occasional newsletter, published by
**THE PONTEFRACT & DISTRICT ARCHAEOLOGICAL
SOCIETY.**

Editor: Eric Houlder, Chairman/Field Director

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MILLENIUM SYMPOSIUM

October 14th 2000.

Chaired by Society President Dr Peter Addyman CBE.

Programme

- 09-45am Arrival & coffee.
- 10-00am Welcome by the Society President Dr P Addyman.
- 10-15am Roman Castleford, Simon Tomson, Excavation Director, WHAT Ltd.
- 10-55am The Swales Yard Project, David Heslop, B.A.
- 11-35am The Saxon church in the Booths: Discovery & Excavation. Tony Wilmott, Central Excavation Service, English Heritage.
- 12-15pm Lunch
- 1-15pm Pontefract Castle & the Civil War. Ian Roberts West Yorks. Archaeology Service.
- 1-55pm Pontefract & Liquorice. Richard Van Riel, Curator, Pontefract Museum.
- 2-35pm Coffee.
- 2-50pm The St Aidan's Project. John Buglass, Project Manager, Humb Archaeology.
- 3-30pm The Wood Hall Moated Manor. Dan Ferguson, WHAT Ltd.
- 4-10pm Closing remarks by the President, and disperse.

There will also be displays and a sales counter

EDITORIAL

THE SYMPOSIUM

Opposite this column is the programme for our grand Millenium Symposium. Whilst debating how to celebrate the end of the present century and the beginning of the next, your Committee decided to stick to the type of event which the Society is perhaps best at organising. Older members may remember the successful Symposium at Carleton Community Centre a dozen years ago, and even, perhaps, the one in Central Methodist Church which launched urban recording in this part of Yorkshire.

This one will be different. To begin with, it is being held in All Saints Parish Hall. The Society was founded in All Saints Parish Hall forty three years ago. The old building has now been superceded by a splendid new one, with ample parking for the speakers, whilst there is plenty of space in the surrounding area for visitors' cars, and free

too!

Another difference is the theme. To mark the end/beginning of the century, it was decided to concentrate on the discoveries made about our local history by archaeologists and historians since the inception of the Society. To this end, we have asked the discoverers themselves to come and address us. Everyone approached agreed, so each speaker is the person who was actually involved in the work, often the Director. This will be the only opportunity to hear all these eminent people on the same day, so please reserve your seat(s) early. A booking slip is appended.

As some members are reluctant to tear out such slips, we suggest that you photocopy this page, which also (fortuitously) contains a renewal form in case you need it!

Pontefract and District Archaeological Society.

New Members; Renewal of Membership; Change of Address Form

PLEASE TICK ONE OF THE BOXES BELOW

I wish to join the Society:

I wish to renew my subscription:

I wish to notify a change of address:

My membership status is:

Student

OAP

Adult

Family

Please do not write in this Box.

Treasurer's Initials:

Record Update Initials:

I CONSENT TO THE SOCIETY KEEPING MY MEMBERSHIP DETAILS IN COMPUTERISED FORM

YES

NO

Personal details will remain confidential under the terms of the DATA PROTECTION ACT. A 'no' return will entail losing some of the benefits of membership.

If you are renewing, we only require your name, initial(s), and postcode.

Title (Mr/Mrs/etc) Initials Surname

Address

Town POSTCODE ☎

Signature Date

Please forward with your remittance (cheques made out to THE PONTEFRAC & DIST. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY to The Treasurer, P&DAS, Mr R P Lockett, 7 Greenfield Road, Hemsworth, WF9 4RL.

SYMPOSIUM BOOKING FORM

Please reserve me _____ places at the Millenium Symposium at a cost of £1-50 per person. My cheque is enclosed with stamped addressed envelope.

Name: _____ To/ P&DAS Symposium. 77 Station Road, Low Ackworth, PONTEFRAC WF7 7HG.

EDITORIAL (continued)

Secrets of the Dead on Channel Four has been something of a mishmash; almost as if a group of intrinsically interesting but totally unrelated documentaries have been strung together to form a series, perhaps to rival *Meet the Ancestors*. The new series, however promises to improve on past mistakes. One of the first sites to be featured is the Hull Magistrates Court site, with our old friend John Buglass pontificating on the medieval skeletons, and in particular on the textiles surviving in the graves. Having been privileged to handle and photograph these fabrics, your Editor looks forward eagerly to see what popularisation makes of it all. A member has already pointed out a comment in the *TV Times* to the effect that medieval underpants were discovered there, but we intend to reserve judgement. It should be broadcast on the evening of 24th July.

Fifteen years ago we assisted Tony Wilmott and the West Yorkshire Archaeology Service to excavate the Saxon church and cemetery in The Booths; indeed, David Hedges actually discovered the church beneath a pile of débris, accidentally(?) left there by a JCB. As a footnote to that story, (which will surely be amplified by Tony on October 14th), the first service since demolition was held in and around the church on the morning of Easter Sunday last. *Churches Together in Pontefract* held an ecumenical service there shortly after dawn. Past Chairman Bob, and current Chairman Eric were appropriately present amongst

the worshippers.

The National Monuments Record in association with The Royal Photographic Society is currently photographing every listed monument in England. The aim is to put the complete record on the internet for the millenium. The National Lottery and Eastman Kodak are picking up the bill, and the work is being done by members of the RPS on a voluntary basis.

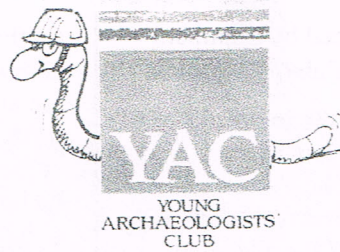
The emphasis on work in the field in this *PontArc* and the last issue is not a dastardly plot by the diggers to hijack the newsletter. The Editor would be delighted to publish accounts of excursions, visits to unusual sites (not necessarily with the Society) and your critiques of television and radio programmes on history and archaeology. We do need the material, so please put pen to paper and send me something, either via the museum, or via any Committee Member.

Finally, when you do settle down to watch *Secrets of the Dead* and annoy family members by constant interjections of "I know Him/her!" isn't it annoying when the telephone rings? Even more annoying when it turns out to be someone trying to sell you double-glazing when you already have it! Before you lose this copy of *PontArc*, ring 0845 0700707 and follow the instructions given. This puts your number on a list that tele-sales operatives are forbidden to ring. It really does filter out most such calls. *BELOW: the Easter Sunday morning service, see above...*



CORN DOLLIES TO SALT LADIES

Young Archaeologists Club



The young archaeologists turned oranges into pomanders, filling the air with the fragrant scent of cloves mixed with the sharp scent of the oranges as they designed their Christmas offerings. This was followed by much laughter as people hid and hunted the real medieval thimble. Quiet was restored by Chris Ingram, telling tales of magic and ghosts before we all swooped on the banquet table to eat our fill. Our Christmas party came before advent but no one seemed to mind.



Parents and families who had come to join in the fun were astonished by the surroundings in which they found themselves. Most had not been inside the Counting House and others did not even know of its existence tucked away as it is with no frontage to the main street.

oOo

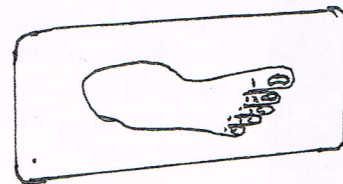
January's activity was indoors but definitely out of season. Gathered round tables covered with piles of corn and barley, a rainbow of ribbons, thread and scissors, a demonstration of how to make fairings and corn dollies began, under the supervision of Chris. Everyone was soon busy making two and three strand fairings and as confidence grew cradles for Cornucopia (the goddess of harvest), angels and rattles were soon under construction. The quick application of a peg stopped the corn from unravelling while joining new lengths of corn to old. Everyone managed to construct a fair copy of a fairing or corn dolly and carried it off with them like a trophy at the end of the meeting.



February found us squeezed into the down stairs room at the museum looking at x-rays of feet and taking off our socks and shoes to look at the real thing. We were able to discover at least five different shapes of foot from the ones with toes slanting from large to small, to ones where the second toe was longer than the first toe.

Great hilarity ensued when it was discovered that the wallpaper squares we had given out to use for drawing round their feet came ready glued and was now well stuck to their hot feet (sorry to the history society if we disturbed your lecture).

To round the afternoon off we tried cutting out and making Roman shoes from felt.



John Hudson, potter was brave enough to take on eighteen apprentice potters plus several adults as makers of Salt Ladies. We started out with lumps of brown and orange clay, which were indistinguishable to our untrained eyes, and a set of templates. Each step was carefully explained and demonstrated before we tried to do it. Most of the Ladies bore a passing resemblance to the one John had made earlier, though one or two looked to be doubled up in mortal agony. One and a half hours later John left the library carrying a tray full of our artistic endeavours to biscuit fire and glaze.

It is rumoured that some of these images are so frightening our potter cannot enter his studio unaccompanied after dark.

Howden Bishops Palace Complex

- Resistivity Survey -

PONTARCH ON TOUR 2000

Work has now commenced by members at the Howden Bishops Palace Complex.

The palace, built within the important mediaeval town of Howden, as a prebendal residence for the Prince Bishops of Durham, is first recorded in 1153. The rise and fall of the site is an interesting study of the social history of the episcopate and nobility of the period.

The complex comprises a quadrangular series of buildings around a central court, to the South-East of the mediaeval Minster building. Individual buildings recorded during property surveys during the C16th, include:

- Bishops Lodgings: Oratory, Private rooms, Chapel, Parlour, Dining and various rooms,
- Large Banqueting Hall, Kitchen and associated rooms,
- Prebendal Accommodation and Stables,
- Mediaeval Archway leading to the Bakehouse, Brewery and Barn,
- Gatehouse and various buildings.

Decay set in within the complex after the dissolution, and in 1850, the majority of the building materials were removed by the Convent & Prior of Ripon, for use elsewhere.

Of those buildings recorded, the banqueting hall, archway and various structural walls are all that remain, albeit often in altered form. In addition several prominent earthworks are present, and these are to be included within the survey

The aim of the survey is twofold, firstly to provide an indication of the extant buried structural remains of the complex, for future research, and, secondly to use the data for research purposes to provide a calibration of the C16th surveys and of resistivity survey processes.

In addition, time and members permitting, further surveys, including: building, topographical, arboricultural and geological surveys are proposed to further aid the understanding of the results and the site.

Much has been written architecturally of the adjacent Minster buildings, however, apart from the Banqueting Hall, the site remains relatively unexplored archaeologically.

The survey works are to be non-invasive, with no excavations currently proposed, however the site presents an important opportunity for members to take part in non-destructive archaeology, on this important mediaeval site.



View of North and West ranges, Circa 1830, with Minster to background. W. Westall A.R.A.

THE HOWDEN GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY - FIRST PROGRESS REPORT.



The Bedern site. Imogen and David look on in astonishment as Allen rehearses for Come Dancing.

The introduction to this important site which appears opposite is by Nick Kelly, who is directing the work under the aegis of the Field Director.

In view of the typically British summer weather that we are at present experiencing, the Society has been particularly lucky at Howden. The initial reconnaissance took place on Easter Sunday, though your Chairman was late arriving as a result of attending the Easter service in The Booths. Everyone who signed up for the work was contacted, and most were able to attend for at least one weekend.

Compared to West Yorkshire, Howden is on another planet. Ample free parking, even on a Saturday, with an excellent fish & chip shop around the corner. All the areas

to be surveyed were on land not publicly accessible, and the Society is grateful to English Heritage and to everyone else who gave permission.

Except for the final day the weather was beautiful, and everything went like clockwork. The only hitch was caused by our hilarity when we were mistaken for *The Time Team*, and Nick was thought to be Phil. Harding. We quickly put them right, insisting that we were the *A-Team!*

Member David Hedges supplied his own resistivity meter and training in its use, ably assisted by Simon, Dan and Allen.

Nick aka Phil., is now beginning to interpret the many data sheets, so the next issue of *PontArc* should include rather more in the way of 'meat' on this important site.

END OF AN ERA: ST AIDAN'S DIG ENDS

It will be very evident, by the time readers reach this point that the Saint Aidan's dig has ended. The last *PontArc* went to press only a few weeks before the end of the dig, and before the BBC Digital programme, which finally appeared in September. Our last act on site was to pose for a group picture on the Site Four ship. Then we took mattocks and saws to it, in an effort to better understand its construction.

Readers wishing to collect the popular accounts of this dig are referred to the July 2000 issue of *Dalesman*. Publicity has also appeared in our own *Pontefract & Castleford Express*, *LRM Landrover Magazine*, *Industrial History*, *The Yorkshire Post*, *The Times*, and of course *Current Archaeology*.

The site and our contribution to its excavation and record is currently an entry in the **British Archaeological Awards**. Judging will take place over the summer, so it is



The final day group on Site Four.

quite likely that we will know whether we have been successful by the time of the Symposium.

A PARABLE OF THE NINETIES – WILL THE MILLENNIUM BRING ANYTHING BETTER?

Once upon a time, a British company and a Japanese company decided to have an annual boat race on the Thames. The Japanese won by a mile. The British firm became very discouraged by this defeat and their morale sagged. Senior management decided that the reason for the defeat had to be found and a project team was set up to investigate the problem and recommend appropriate action to be taken.

Their conclusion was –

The Japanese team had eight people rowing and one person steering.

The British team had one person rowing and eight people steering.

Senior management immediately hired a consultancy company to do a study of the British team's structure. Millions of pounds and several months later they concluded that:-

Too many people were steering and not enough were rowing.

To prevent losing to the Japanese the following year the team structure was changed to one rower, four steering managers, three senior steering managers and one executive steering manager. A performance and appraisal system was set up to give the person rowing the boat more incentive to work harder and become a key performer. The next race the Japanese won by two miles.

The British firm immediately laid off the rower for poor performance, sold off all the oars, rowlocks and seats, cancelled all capital investment for new equipment and halted development of a new boat. They awarded high performance awards to the consultants and distributed the money saved to senior management, after which they then sold out to the Japanese.

Anon.

With thanks to the NAS/UWT RMA Yorkshire Regional Newsletter

STOP PRESS

The following news came in after *PontArc* was ready for printing:

Our sincere congratulations to our President Dr Peter Addyman on the recent award of the **Companion of the British Empire**, (CBE). If we may allowed to add a comment, it was not before time!

We have just received notice that **Professor Mick Aston of The Time Team** will be speaking to the Society on the 14th December 2001, and attending the Pontefract Young Archaeologists' Club on the morning of the 15th. Though over a year in advance, both young and old should reserve these dates now.