

ALTOGETHER ARCHAEOLOGY



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Fig.1: Dr. Rob Young getting stuck in at the Gueswick dig

This Issue...

Editorial:

Page 1

Church Corner:

Page 2

Gueswick Dig 2022:

Page 5

Warham Camp

Page 9

AA Award

Page 10

Ness of Brodgar

Page 11

Assynt:

Page 21

Quiz:

Page 25

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Editorial

Welcome to the December 2022 edition of the Altogether Archaeology Newsletter. Yet again we've packed a lot into this year with an assortment of walks, talks and workshops which we hope many of you have enjoyed. Grateful thanks go to Elaine Vallack for putting together such a varied and informative itinerary.

Some eager members dusted off their trowels to take part in a number of summer excavations including a dig in the Greta Valley led by Beverley Still from Durham University, and the Gueswick dig at Cotherstone in Teesdale led by Dr. Rob Young. Finally, there was an exploratory excavation of the possible Roman road at Kirkhaugh near Alston. These digs have thrown up a number of interesting finds that require additional excavation next year. Roll on the summer!

In this edition...

- Page.2** - Alan Newham recounts a spooky visit to a church at Brignall, N. Yorks
- Page.5** - Martin Green's summarises the 2022 Gueswick dig
- Page.9** - Margaret Ablett takes us on a journey to Warham Camp Iron Age Hillfort
- Page.10** - Altogether Archaeology wins a prestigious award
- Page.11** - Lorraine Clay works with Orkney Stones
- Page.21** - Enlightening a hidden gem of archaeology at Assynt in Scotland with Janet and Brian Stirk

Hopefully you'll find these articles interesting and enjoyable!

And then... test your knowledge of stratigraphy with the quiz on **page.25**

And finally... I am on the lookout for items for the Spring edition. So if you have any suggestions for items or would like to contribute an article yourself then please get in touch (details on Page.27)

Sue Goldsborough

Editor

Church Corner

THE TRUE EVENTS FOLLOWING A VISIT TO TWO LOCAL CHURCHES AT BRIGNALL AND BARNINGHAM

North Yorkshire



Fig.1: Lime trees to the east

Working during the day on an archaeological excavation, I found myself with free time of an evening to pursue my interest in church architecture. So it was that I came to visit the remote and picturesque ruin of Old Saint Mary's church. It is reached following a rough, winding and sloping footpath from the village of Brignall.

The church stands near one corner of a very large and stepped pasture field; not far away and standing alone is a huge old ash tree, its lower branches sagging toward the ground (fig.2). Behind the east end of the church, forming a delightful backdrop, is a row of tall lime trees (fig.1); behind them the River Greta, beyond which the land rises steeply and covered with

towering trees. The church would have served the parishioners of the nearby medieval village, now no longer to be seen.



Fig.2: The ash tree stands guard to the west

The roofless church, surrounded by a low wall containing the overgrown graveyard, consists of a much re-organised east end and the truncated north and south walls leading from it. There is no west end above ground. In the east wall is a large pointed window opening, any mouldings on which are now lost, and there is evidence of earlier (lancet?) windows (fig.3) either side of the opening suggesting perhaps a triple lancet arrangement of late 12th or the first half of the 13th century? There are big side-alternate quoins forming the north east and south east corners (might they be Saxo-Norman?). The north and south walls extend but a few metres westward and stand a mere six feet



Fig.3: East end interior with the jamb of an earlier window to the north

high, while all around in the long undergrowth lie large stones, some of which are associated with the walls, some of which are moulded. There is a complete piscina with drain hole for washing mass vessels in situ in the interior south west wall.

There would be little else to say but for the surprise of what must be part of a possible Saxon cross shaft now covered with lichen, its narrow edge facing outward and embedded four courses up from the floor in the interior north wall. As I knelt down and traced with my finger the simple interlace pattern (fig.4), I distinctly heard what sounded like noisy human footsteps, as if among the long grasses behind the east wall of the church. I must say, being of a rather delicate and sensitive

nature, I suffered a momentary frisson of spine-tingling fear. Tentatively, I reached my head around the east wall and...nothing. Yet I distinctly heard something I would argue was of a man-made nature; not animal or vegetable, but human. Had I disturbed some restless spirit or even that of the sculptor? It seemed to me such an odd occurrence on a warm sunny evening and as I left, I was confronted by the huge ash tree and being of a nervous disposition, it immediately reminded



Figure 1: Interlace pattern, 9th century

me of the M.R. James ghost story 'The Ash Tree' – "There is something more than we know of in that tree, my Lord".

I was relieved to continue my journey to view the church in Barningham village. I arrived along a narrow track and parked outside the entrance gate. Although the church is Georgian in origin, it is a late Victorian gothic remodelling, so of no great particular interest from the outside. Besides the church was locked. I returned to my car and was about to start the engine when, all of a sudden, a thick swarm of black flies descended onto my

windscreen. Startled into action, I fired the engine and applied the windscreen wipers to give me sight so as to drive away, and having reached the minor road I tried to rid myself of this execrable happening as my nerves gave way to feverish imaginings: being minded of that scene in the film 'Amityville Horror' in which the character of the priest, played by the actor Rod Steiger, is engulfed by flies! What had begun as a pleasant evening had ended rather inauspiciously. The following day I recalled the previous evening's events to my friend S as we toiled with our trowels, S being interested enough as to ask me to show him the ruin of Old Saint Mary's church. So it was that at the end of our archaeological endeavours, we made our visit. Now my friend S, a practical, no-nonsense fellow, took great interest in the ruin and its surroundings, and now myself, emboldened with company, repeated my tracing of the interlace pattern, (would we hear the footsteps?). I must say I detected a somewhat sceptical countenance upon the face of S. Well... we heard nothing... on this occasion. I can only urge those who are enchanted with such romantic settings to visit the ruin of Old Saint Mary's church. Go alone in bright moonlight and trace the pattern of the interlace with your finger...

Alan Newham

(Photos: A Newham)

Gueswick 2022

A summary of the Gueswick Dig



Mealttime at the Gueswick Dig 2022

The weather gods were in a good mood again for this year's August dig at Gueswick: over three weeks we lost almost no time to rain, though the scorching conditions for the first week slowed us down. In all, the two trenches totalled nearly 200 square metres, a similar size to previous years' summer digs.

Launching into a dig in the middle of a fairly featureless field is always a bit worrying: Have we surveyed our trenches in correctly? Were the magnetometry survey squares where we thought they were? But all turned out OK due to Stephen's mastery of the subtleties of our new GPS, assisted by Rob P in the role of sorcerer's apprentice. The magnetometry predicted that there were three ditches around the settlement site, and our Trench 5 found all three. The central one turned out to be similar to the palisade trench that we excavated last year on the opposite side of the settlement; it is probably the same ditch despite interesting differences: the packing stones in the base didn't include bones, and rather than being paved over when it went out of use early in the Romano-British period, rounded stones (possibly pebbles from the river) were tipped in to fill it. The second ditch, rather smaller and inside the palisade ditch, is possibly the original enclosure ditch around the settlement. And the outer ditch, faint and curving on the magnetometry, was indeed shallow, with the top half filled with stones.

Meanwhile in Trench 4 we looked for evidence of settlement in the central area. This was rather a stab in the dark as the magnetometry didn't show any clear structures, just suggestions of curving alignments in a "busy" area. Fortunately, there was evidence in abundance that we were in a settlement area, the finds showed rich and varied evidence of Iron Age and Romano-British occupation. Highlights were a spearhead, some fragments of white glass bangles (fashionable from 60AD to 200AD: after that black became the in-colour for bangles), a coin of the second century (a twin of the one found last year), some sherds of mortaria (the classic Roman kitchen vessel), and blobs of glass and copper-alloy (suggesting glass- and metal-working on site).



Gueswick 2022 - Trench 4

The pottery finds were varied and ranged from thick coarse Iron Age sherds to classier Romano-British wares, and even a small sherd or two of high-status Roman Samian-type ware. We also found flagstone surfaces, with a hearth. Two pairs of circular quern-stones had deliberately been included in the paving: probably a significant action to the Iron Age mind. We didn't manage to work out the floor-plan of any buildings: the paved surfaces extended beyond the trench edges, so that will have to wait for next year.

The final day or two of the dig was a scramble to record the trenches and collect laboratory samples. Unusually for a non-professional group, we are able to use a wide range of techniques. These includes flotation for environmental analysis of the fills of the three ditches, species identification of charcoal samples (and if suitable sending them on for radiocarbon dating), ancient DNA analysis of the ditch-fills (which will tell us what plants and animal materials were in the fill), and luminescence dating (OSL) of the fill in the smaller two ditches. The latter two techniques are experimental and possible only through our collaboration with the international TerrACE project, who researched the Gueswick terraces. The DNA samples had to be kept cool (so lived in

my fridge next to the yoghurt) before posting to Tromsø in arctic Norway for 7 processing. On the other hand, the OSL samples had to be kept in absolute darkness so stayed in a box, in a bin-bag, in a dustbin, in my garage until posted off to labs in Salzburg. The customs declaration for both lots of samples was a problem as they belonged in none of the listed categories of permitted goods. Meanwhile the spearhead is in the Durham labs for x-raying and conservation.



Gueswick 2022 - Taking samples from the palisade trench

We'll know more once we have laboratory reports, of course, but the site is clearly something different to the "standard" upland late Iron Age settlement in the north of England. It may have started as a small settlement of a couple of round-houses with an enclosing bank (like those seen elsewhere in Teesdale, Weardale, and further north). However, it then developed into a larger settlement surrounded by a substantial palisade by the end of the Iron Age. There were major changes around the start of the Roman era, with both stretches of palisade going out of use and a new phase in the history of the settlement then started; the coins, mortaria sherds, and high-quality pottery suggest that the inhabitants adopted some aspects of Roman life... the North Pennines weren't just a "native reserve" with minimal contact with the conquerors.

The two long-delayed radiocarbon dates for the palisade trench excavation in 2021 finally arrived soon after the 2022 dig finished. They fit in well with the single date we already have. The A bone from the very bottom of the ditch dated to 20BC, a bone from higher in the palisade packing to 10AD, and a tooth from the top of the ditch, just

under the paving over the ditch to 60AD. This seems to confirm that the palisade was erected in the very late Iron Age, but was out of use around the time of the arrival of the Romans. We may never know if it was demolished when the Romans first gained control; unfortunately, the calibration curve for radiocarbon dates “wobbles” in the late first century, so 50AD and 100AD can’t be distinguished. In any case, the date at which the Brigantes came under direct Roman control (rather than being allied with them) is uncertain; if Tacitus is to be believed, there were phases of alliance and rebellion, before total Roman domination.



Gueswick 2022 – yet another two querns – with a blackened hearth-stone at top right

With the data from 2021, plus this year’s laboratory results, we will have probably all the information we need about the ditches. So next year, the emphasis will switch to excavating more of the settlement, with Trench 4 being extended to uncover more of the paving. Certain members will be pleased to know they won’t spend another three weeks of their lives five foot down in a ditch. Some additional magnetometry is planned in the Spring, continuing the survey northwards to find out where the palisade trench goes to, and to see if there’s any other areas of settlement on the hill-top plateau. Meanwhile an interim report will appear once we have at least some of the laboratory reports back (and I’ve found the time to write it). As usual, none of this would have happened without the enthusiasm and hard work of members, as well as the commitment and knowledge of Rob Young directing the show. All helping to maintain AA’s track record of high quality exciting archaeological work.

Martin Green

(Photos: M. Green)

Warham Camp

A journey to an Iron Age Hillfort.....

While on holiday at Wells-Next-the-Sea, Norfolk, my husband and I went to see Warham Camp, an Iron Age hill fort. Taking our lives into our hands we drove several miles along narrow single-track lanes with no passing places - incredible! Fortunately I only had to use my exemplary reversing skills once, for a short distance and with the help of a gateway into a field. There was just no traffic anywhere. This initial nerve-wracking journey was followed by a walk along a farm track, half a mile roughly and we were there.



Wow! Amazing! It is probably the best-preserved Iron Age hill fort in Norfolk and the large curving ditches that greet you as you walk towards them are



quite spectacular. They are very deep but would have been two metres deeper originally. Warham Camp is an iron age hill fort with a diameter of 212m. It is a Scheduled Monument and a Site of Special Scientific interest. Excavations in 1914 and 1959 recorded evidence of a timber palisade and platform as well as iron age and roman pottery. It has been suggested that Queen Boudicca and her Icenii tribe occupied the hill fort. It is easy to imagine warriors guarding the fort on top of the tremendous earth banks.



Warham Camp is now a dramatic horseshoe-shape having been altered from a circular one in the 18th century when the river Stiffkey was rerouted. It is a really, impressive place, although you do have to have nerves of steel to reach it.

After our visit we discovered a well-hidden farm shop and refreshed ourselves with a cup of tea and a glorious home-made pie.

Alan would have been proud of us!



10

Margaret Ablett
(Photos: M. Ablett)

Bob Pendlebury Award

Wow...another success story! **Altogether Archaeology** were the worthy winners of The Pendlebury Award 2022 for their contribution to the understanding of the history of part of the North Pennines. A great achievement. And a big 'thank you' to Rob Young for nominating AA.



Chris Woodley-Stewart presenting The Pendlebury Award to Tony Metcalfe (Chairman) and members of AA at the recent Christmas do

Recollections of Working in Stone

Introduction

When Anne Mitchell asked me to cover worked stone with Gary Lloyd at the 2022 Ness of Brodgar excavation I went mudstone grey. Not only did I have no knowledge of worked stone or geology – Gary had written papers and produced videos on worked stone! How could I help?

After the initial desire to cry came the desire for knowledge and I pressed Anne and Gary for articles that I could access online and available books. Visits to bookshops were fruitless. Gary directed me to Orkney Stone tools¹ and Anne to Anne Clarke's blog and BAR report². I read into the night, absorbing every bit of information I could gather, and pestering Gary with every stone – is this sandstone, is this siltstone, and gradually I began to get it right.

As a potter and craft instructor as well as an archaeologist, I realised my way to understand the materials I was looking at was to engage in the making process – to create my own Skaill knives and stone bars, to problem solve during the trial and error involved in their creation.

Beachcombing

The first leg of experiments came out of the assertion that Skaill knives were made by throwing cobbles down onto other fixed stones³. As I intended to take a pilgrimage to Ostara crafts, a visit to Skaill Bay was not far out of the way. Even with sticks I decided going too far down the beach was not good health and safety and focussed on picking up cobbles quite high up the beach and throwing them at larger stones. This caused the thrown cobble to bounce some distance with a loud ring, like a Tibetan bowl, without it breaking.

Several attempts gave no results. Finally one stone bounced onto a third and split into three (one half crosswise and two quarters width wise (fig.1).



Fig.1: Split cobble

¹ Orkneystonetools.org.uk

² Clarke, A. 2006 Stone tools and the Prehistory of the Northern Isles. <https://annrocks.co.uk/>

³ <https://www.nessofbrodgar.co.uk/focus-on-finds-skaill-knives/>

[NB: Martha Johnson tells me the split cobble was already worked, which might explain it being slightly weaker than other stones bounced]. I also collected flag to make stone bars (fig.2).

Picking a polissoir was limited by my ability to carry one, although a couple caught my eye as having potential to be used in situ (fig.3), and it seemed feasible the best place to work tool was at the beach or where bedrock provided a firm work-surface, and the stony shore east and west of the Ness could be a good place to look for polissoirs, anvils, and debitage.

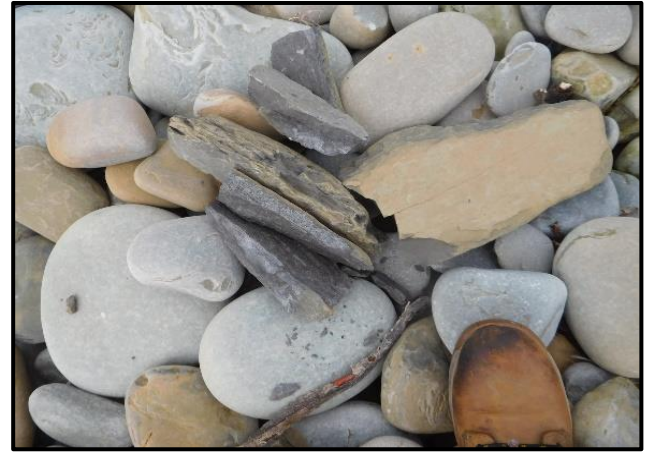


Fig.2: Flag bars



Fig.3: Heavy beach stones suitable as polissoirs

Flaking the stone bars using a hammerstone, 'workbench', and direct percussion on the beach resulted in the stone flaking more than desired. Polishing the resultant bar on the Skaill bay polissoir (fig.4) was only slightly successful in rounding the jagged edges but not in creating a useable tool.

In an attempt to split the thick side of the broken Skaill cobble (fig.1), I threw the cobble at a sandstone block, left from an open-day display, and discovered that the cobble was leaving a white peck mark on the sandstone but was itself undamaged. This immediately told me the sandstone was softer than the cobble and gave me the idea to continue direct pecking the cup.



Fig.4: Skaill Bay polissoir – good for polishing

Adding a ring was almost instinctive, following the outside curve of the cup and took about another hour, surprisingly no great feat at all (fig.5).



Fig.5: Shallowly pecked sandstone cup and ring motif

Using the sharp fine edge of the Skaili split quarter cobble, I incised lines with ease (fig.6) and rubbed a small piece of clay (from the ground beside the finds hut) and incised lines through to create a contrast, all in a matter of minutes. The rubbed in clay became quickly indistinct. Chris Gee also donated a piece of haematite to draw red lines, which also left an indent, remaining after the colour was washed off.

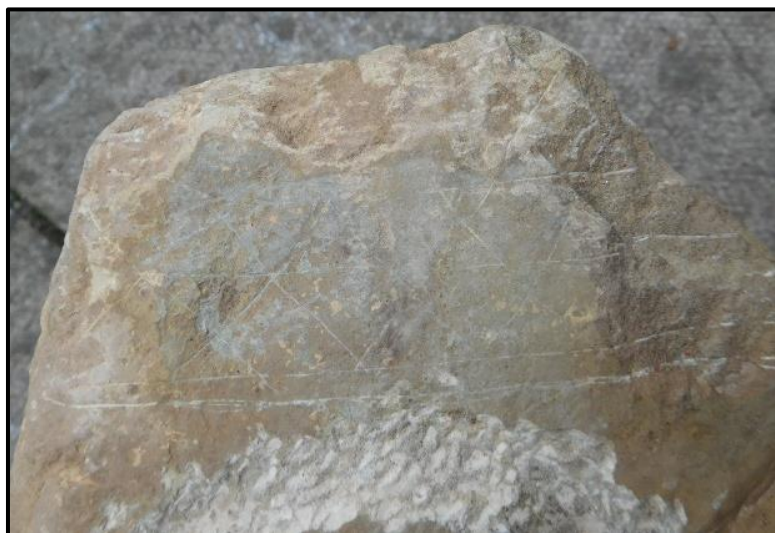


Fig.6: Lines incised in sandstone with siltstone (left) and haematite (right)

To test how easy it was to create curves and spirals, I drew with a quartz fragment (fig.7) from Birsay on the fine polissoir and on the sandstone with the quartz pebble, easily creating a white line. On a flag from trench J spoil, I pecked a shallow horned spiral directly, still using the half cobble, in a matter of minutes (fig.8). On the edge it was more difficult to control direct percussion to create eyebrows (fig.9), and the Birsay fragment was too small to hold, so a broken quartz cobble from Scapa was bought into play as a point (fig.8) and the side of the split cobble used as a hammer (fig.11). This was tricky to do on the thin flag, and splitting of the layers began early when the hammer and point was close to the edge. I believe I held it in front of my knees, chocked and with one side on the ground.

14



Fig.7: Scapa and Birsay quartz 'tools' and a sharp flake off a siltstone pebble



Fig.8: Horned spiral pecked on flagstone (left)

Fig.9: Eyebrows indirectly pecked on edge of flagstone (below)



I was advised by Chris Gee that the best way to make an axe is to start with a stone as near to the shape you want as you can find, and a foray to Scapa was successful (he did agree this added a risk of using a real axe, which has made me consider how axes might have been reused over thousands of years, being lost and refund/used/reworked). The flat, flared, stone was very similar to an axe to start with so only needed the wide end sharpening. Using the Skail Bay polissoir was slow work and I was advised to use a rougher stone, which Chris Gee proffered me from a spoil heap.

Initially I sat in a chair, leaning forward using one hand at a time (like I would with a carborundum), with the stone on the ground, chocked by stones around it to reduce its movement. I progressed to kneeling in front of the stone (in waterproofs), still using one hand at a time, so pushing at a slight diagonal (focussing through the shoulder and on the tricep). Using two hands separately, I created wear across the surface of the stone, rather than a channel, as I felt for points of engagement/friction.

The sandstone was used for sharpening the blade, the Skail Bay cobble for polishing the blade and the sides (fig.10). An initial sharp blade took about 7 hours, but letting the public try caused some blunting. I decided to focus on polishing and to leave the final sharpening for last.



Fig.10: Siltstone axe in progress

Water or not?

I was advised to use water but sometimes this seemed to decrease abrasion. While it is good health and safety, I wonder whether there is evidence of its use in prehistory. The water and stone dust running down the stone leaves creamy lines and a build-up in recesses, which could be looked for on/around worked stones.

Without water the dust could be brushed/swept off. Water with an abrasive might resolve the lost friction (perhaps ochre?). 16

Incised lines II - A matter of ambidexterity?

Reworking at home I also found water unnecessary but did use a little on the axe itself while working to ascertain where the colour was emerging and where needed more work, washing off the polissoir when there was build-up. I am using two new polissoir – a gritty red sandstone from P spoil (from Chris) and a smooth rounded cobble from Newark (fig.11). The smooth one is not as well balanced or rounded as the Skail bay one, and I may replace it when next at the beach, but it does sit nicely on my knee.



Fig.11: Ness butterfly and arcs on polissoir

Action was more linear polishing the sides and grinding the sides symmetrically, however when I was polishing the axe, particularly the blade, I noticed instead of a straight line a natural curved line coming from my wrist movement rotating the blade along the stone, similar to that on the Brodgar butterfly (fig.11), a left facing arc with my left hand; a right facing arc with my right hand. Is there evidence that these curves were made by using different hands? I progressed to using a small hammer-anvil-polissoir against the axe, held in my hands, and to finish I used a pumice (from the bathroom!), chamois, and beeswax. The beeswax gave a more visible shine, but the stone felt smoother without it.

My incisions so far were on sandstone, not flag, and I made some deep incisions using siltstone then conglomerate (fig.12) and noted a left/right rising diagonal was natural with a left hand, a right/left rising with a right hand. Considering whether *some* incisions could be created during tool creation or sharpening, I also incised the flag with bone (from Harris) and tooth (from North Ronaldsay) (fig.12), ochre and a fine siltstone flake (fig.13).



Fig.12: Incising x with sandstone (top left) bone (top right) and tooth (centre)



Fig.13: Incising x with ochre (left) and siltstone (right)

Deepening RA

I began to deepen the horned spiral down into the dark coloured layer (fig.14). It was more difficult to peck down to this layer and the split cobble was no longer sharp enough. I used indirect percussion and the quartz finger for a while but this chipped. I then used a North Ronaldsay siltstone finger from which fine slivers shattered off, eventually using flint from the garden which I split over an anvil with a hammerstone.



Fig. 14: Deepened horned spiral and cup and ring with tools used

On the second occasion, I sharpened the Skail split cobble by placing it on the wall-stone anvil and glancing it with the cobble hammer-anvil-polissoir until it fractured into a point, a quarter part of the Skail split cobble, and then both ends of a quartz chunk (probably from Orkney). For deepening the cup and ring I used the resharpened Skail cobbles then the quartz chunk.

Needle

When creating a sharp bone point to use to incise, I shattered a bone from Harris. The fragments of this gave me the idea to make a needle and see which tools were useful and what marks were added to the tools.

There was a worked bone fragment in 2019 (fig.15) which was par drilled, this suggested that the hole was made first. Drilling the hole was the most difficult. This involved rotating, alternately⁴ a fine flint point, chip of Birsay quartz, the siltstone flake, a cubic chip of quartz from Harris and a fragment of black Lewisian Gneiss with two points. I believe a bow drill would have been easier but would need constructing. It took over two hours to see light



Fig.15: Worked bone fragments

⁴ Because they were small and tricky to hold.

through the hole (compared to how easy the rock art was!), the bone being very tough. Smoothing the sides was relatively quick (about 20 minutes) using my rough wall stone, rough red sandstone, Newark polissoir and small hammer-anvil-polissoir. I also used a rough but flat sided chunk of red gneiss to smooth the underside (on its back on the small hammer-anvil-polissoir) (fig.16).

I have since checked my photos and there do not appear to be needles on display at Scara Brae, so I do not have a pattern to follow. Birsay bone needles are Viking. The internet says there were some (at Skara Brae **or** Links of Noltland)⁵; D.V. Clarke and Niall Sharples, *Settlements and Subsistence in the Third Millennium B.C.E.* apparently mentions bone needles at Skara Brae⁶.



Fig. 16: Bone needle, various tools used, and marks on the tools

Wrapping up

I have finished the axe, cheating a little with beeswax for a visible shine, but the stone felt smoother without. I have decided not to work it further as there was a fine crack when I began the process which is being exacerbated by working on it. I will observe the pecked horned spiral and cup and ring over winter to see whether it splits. I will repeat these experiments with other rock, most recently a surprising one from Kirkhaugh, to see which stones are easier to work, and which motifs easiest to

⁵ <https://scarf.scot/national/scarf-neolithic-panel-report/5-material-culture-and-use-of-resources/5-3-organics/5-3-1-bone-antler-marine-ivory-and-shell/>

⁶ https://wikishire.co.uk/wiki/Skara_Brae#cite_note-28

create, also watching these over time to see how long the pale crushed stone contrast lasts. I have also started a siltstone chisel.

20



Lorraine Clay
(Photos: L. Clay)

Fig.17: Finished axe head

ASSYNT

A Stunning Hidden Gem

We first came across Assynt in north-west Scotland, with its dramatic scenery, lochs, waterfalls and sandy beaches, when cycling from the east coast to the west coast in the late 1970s (not to be recommended on bikes with only 3 gears!).

Later we took the family and over the years, saw porpoises, otters, eagles, a variety of sea birds, a pine martin and numerous red deer.

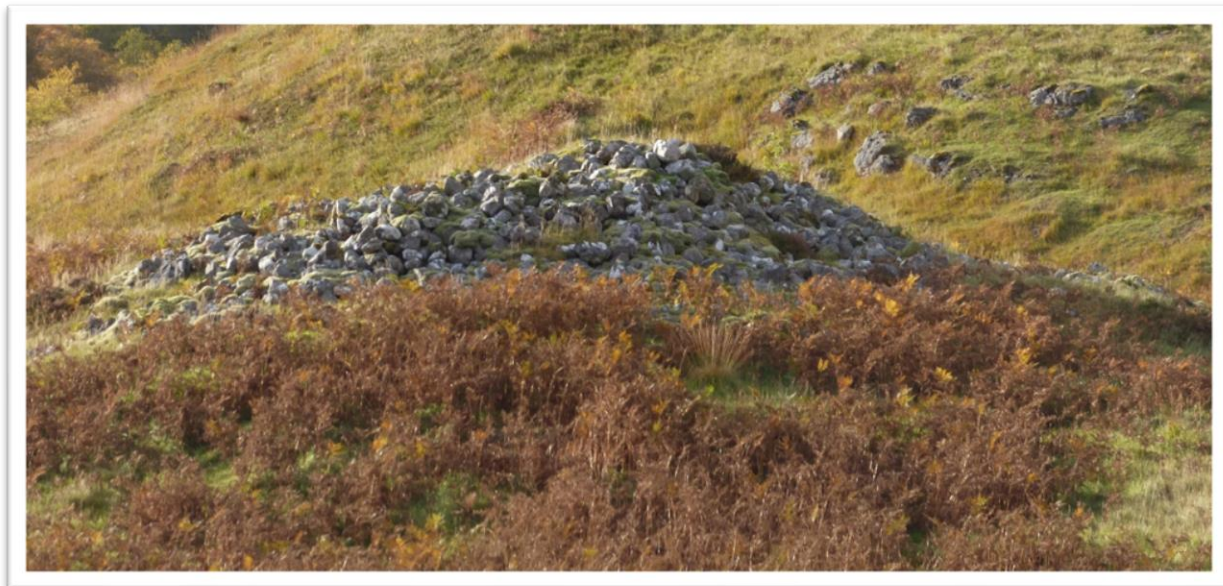
Now we also go for the archaeology.



An Dun (Gaelic for fort), Clashnessie. On this flat top rock are the foundations of a structure with an entrance on the land side dated 550BC to 560AD [Highland Regional Council, Archaeological Sites and Monuments Records]

Assynt has the largest concentration of Neolithic chambered cairns in Scotland, often situated on the margins of good pasture and upland moor. This three-chambered cairn at Ardvreck, dating before 2000BC, was excavated in 1925. Discovery of a crouched skeleton was interpreted as re-use of the cairn after it had been blocked up [Highland Historic Environment Record]





***A Considerably dilapidated chambered burial cairn near Inchnadamph
(Ordnance Survey – Name Book 1848 - 1878)***



***Excavation of the Inchnadamph bone caves revealed the remains of lynx,
reindeer and polar bear***



(Above and below) Clachtoll Broch was built into the bedrock on a crag above the sea on one side and a steep slope on the other. Two carbon dates were as early as 300BC. Being close to collapse the site was excavated, stabilised and rebuilt in 2017 (www.clachtollbroch.com CA332)





One of several small crannogs

From Assynt to Kilmartin, Lochgilphead – by car now!



A burial of a woman inside two stone circles. Excavated by the pioneering archaeologist and priest Cannon William Greenwell in 1864



Ormaig, 'a place famous for its mysterious rock carvings' [sign board]. Just a taste of what neolithic rock art can be seen in Kilmartin Glen, but as there are over 100 sites, they are for another time!

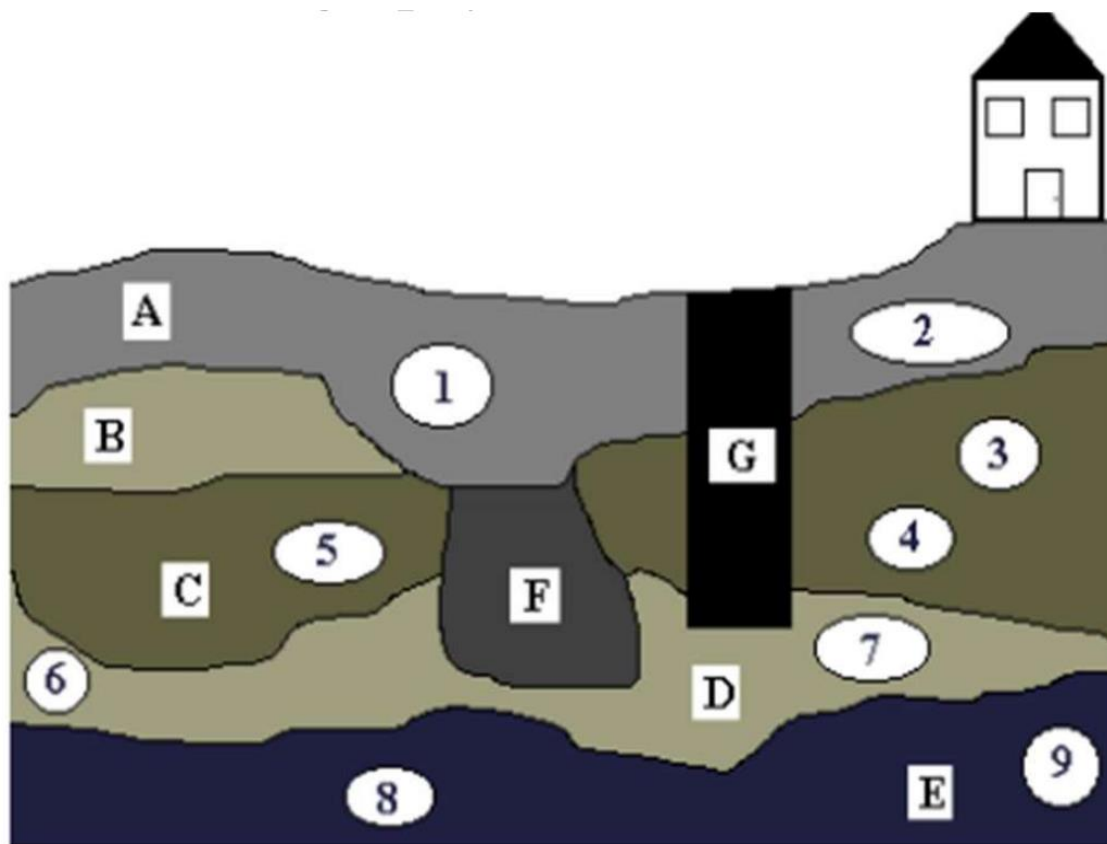
Janet and Brian Stirk

(Photos: J & B Stirk)

QUIZ

Know Your Stratigraphy

Stratigraphy is the oldest method that archaeologists use to date artifacts. It is based on the **Law of Superposition** which states that as long as layers of soil are undisturbed the oldest layer will be on the bottom and the most recent will be located on the top. Below is a Stratigraphy Map showing the different layers of soil deposit, layers A-G. Within these layers different artifacts were found, numbered 1-9. Answer the following questions keeping in mind the Law of Superposition.



Soil Deposits - Layers A – G

Artifacts:

1. Piece of a Glass Bottle
2. Face from a Ceramic Doll
3. Arrowhead
4. Clay Pottery Shard
5. Charred Fish Bones
6. Stone Scraper
7. Sharpened Deer Bone
8. Mastodon Bone Fragment
9. Spear Point

Questions

26

1. Which is older: the arrowhead or the spear point?
2. If G is a well, who do you think dug it?
3. Is layer B older or more recent than layer D?
4. Were there humans living here when layer E was being formed?
5. Were there humans living here when layer B was being formed?
6. Name an animal that lived here when layer D was being formed.
7. Layer F is a garbage pit. What layer were the people who dug it living in? What artifacts might have belonged to the person who dug it?
8. Which is older: the clay pottery sherd or the sharpened deer bone?
9. Which was deposited more recently: the fish bones or level D?



10. How might the mastodon have been killed? Who do you think might have killed it.

(Answers – page 28)

Contribute to the Newsletter...

We produce two newsletters each year: a shorter Spring edition with news and updates after the AGM and another, longer issue at the end of the year. The Winter edition is a celebration of the year's events with contributions from members about activities, their particular archaeological/ architectural/historical obsessions or interesting sites they have visited.

We are always on the lookout for contributions, and welcome submissions of general archaeological interest as well as those about AA activities, so please let us know what you have been up to!

If you would like to contribute an article or photographs for the next edition, contact the Newsletter Editor, Sue Goldsborough at:

sgoldsborough2002@yahoo.co.uk

Many thanks to the following members for this edition's contributions and photographs:

Margaret Ablett
Lorraine Clay
Martin Green
Alan Newham
Brian and Janet Stirk

Looking ahead to 2023...

7th January at Mickleton Village Hall 11.00am – 3.00pm

♦ Stephen Wootford will tell us about the reconstruction of the former RAF Operations Room at the Imperial War Museum (IWM)

♦ Derek Sims explains what is available at the Fitzhugh Library

23rd January 2023 meeting at Tower Tye 9.45am – 4.00pm

♦ Head to Ravensheugh Crag with Phil Bowyer to explore the prehistoric landscape near to Hadrian's Wall

[Full details available on the Altogether Archaeology website].

And finally...



*May this one be
your best year yet!*



Honorary President

Stewart Ainsworth

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Karen Heys

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Quiz Answers

1. Spear point
2. People who live in the house
3. More recent
4. Yes, because of the spear point
5. No, there are no artifacts **or** Yes, there is nothing left from the people
6. Deer
7. Layer A, Glass Bottle or Ceramic Doll
8. Deer Bone
9. Fish Bones
10. By a Spear. A Native American (Mastodon were native to North America)