

NORTH DEVON ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



ISSUE 7 SPRING 2004

NDAS Committee 2004-5

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Council for British Archaeology (York) 01904 671417

National Sites and Monuments Register (Swindon) 01793 414600

Membership

As at 31st March 2004, NDAS had 115 members. Our numbers are steadily increasing, and we should like to hope that this continues. Just in case it has slipped your mind, may we remind you that the 2004-5 subscription became due on 1st April (£12.00 individual members, £18.00 couples, £3.75 students).

You are invited to save yourself the worry of having to remember to renew your subscription by taking out a standing-order. This helps both you and the Society. **May I remind you that we have changed our banking arrangements, and therefore existing standing orders should be cancelled. New forms were issued with the update that went out in January. If you don't have one, please contact the Membership Secretary.**

Payments by post (cheques payable to NDAS/NDRA) should be sent to Jane Green, NDAS Membership Secretary, 5 Chambercombe Park Terrace, Ilfracombe EX34 9QW. If you have any enquiries, please phone Jane on 01271 866662.

New Recruits: Included with this newsletter is a membership form for you to pass on to anyone you know who would like to join NDAS.

Contents

Editorial - Working Together	4
Field-Boundary Survey at Holworthy Farm	5
Recording a 19th Century Smithy at East Knowstone	8
First Outing with the Resistivity Metre	10
Fishweirs - Update 4	11
The NDAS Pottery Day	12
From the Bottom up - Restoring the Holworthy Pot	14
Fieldwork - Summer 2004	16
A History of Hele - A New Website	17
An Ace Smelting	19
Community Landscapes Project - Update	20
Fund Raising	21
The Hatherleigh Landscape Group	22
Diana Warmington writes	22
The Portable Antiquities Scheme	23
Exmoor Archaeology Volunteers	23
Bringing the Romans up to Date	24
Images of England	24
A New Member's Experiences	25
A Cry for Help	26
Dates for Your Diary	26
Parracombe and the Heddon Valley	28
An Unfinished History	
Grants Received	28

Working Together

Editorial

'Networking' has become a buzz-word, but like most of such jargon, the word meant something in the first place and as far as NDAS is concerned, it neatly summarises what the Society has been trying to do over the past few years. For a variety of reasons there are now throughout northern Devon active archaeological and historical groups. Against this background of increasing activity, NDAS has been instrumental in bringing people together to share ideas, discoveries and experiences. The recent change to the Society's constitution formalises the 'association' arrangement, whereby groups who so wish have representation on the NDAS committee. In this common forum they can meet on a regular basis, make joint arrangements or co-ordinate their plans, exchange information and jointly make decisions advancing the cause of the "heritage" of the region. This process is still evolving, but we see concrete results in, for example, the co-operation currently being worked out between the Hatherleigh Landscape Group and NDAS. It would be arrogant to claim that this makes NDAS an 'umbrella' group. But it does mean that people who are interested in the archaeology of northern Devon have access both to a "neighbourhood" group and to one with a broader, area-wide remit. Over and above this, of course, there is the Devon Archaeological Society with its long history, its county-wide brief and a national reputation. Perhaps we have inserted an extra tier into the arrangements, which, in such a large and diverse county, must be a good thing.

What about the historical element in this scenario? Increasingly the word 'historic' appears as an all-embracing term, as in 'Historic Environment Record' (HER) which we used to know as the Sites and Monuments Register (SMR); and a crop of 'Historic Environment Research Strategies' (HERS). Somewhat with this in mind, in the past few months the Society has

conducted a debate with itself on whether to add the word 'Historical' to its name. We are not alone in debating this sort of thing. The Council for British Archaeology's winter general meeting was devoted to the topic "Bridging the Divides: Archaeology and History in a Common Future". It is therefore a question which is being examined nationally. After discussion, it was decided within the NDAS general committee and at the Society's AGM that there was no virtue for us in making a change at this time. It was felt that to extend the Society's remit in this way would diminish its focus at a time when we are active and effective in what we do.

Nevertheless, since archaeology has to do with the physical remains of the past right up to yesterday, documented 'history' provides much of the context. We cannot avoid the fact that archaeology and history flow into each other. There must therefore be advantage in getting together with historians once in a while. There is no single, regional historical society in northern Devon, but there are numerous small groups and individuals beavering away. If we're not going to expand our brief, why don't we, therefore, extend our 'networking' function and bring these groups and the various archaeological groups together? With this in mind, the Society is planning a local history forum in the autumn. To organise it, we hope to form a committee with representatives of local historical and archaeological groups from across northern Devon. The aim will be to display to each other and to the general public the work and research in which local groups are engaged. It is not yet certain whether the "forum" will take the form of an exhibition or a day of short presentations or both. Whichever form it takes, we - NDAS and local archaeological groups - will be there beside the local historians displaying a shared interest in filling out the historic and prehistoric picture of northern Devon.

Field Boundary Survey at Holworthy Farm: The Results

Terry Green

In previous editions of the NDAS Newsletter there have been several references to the field-boundary survey being conducted within the Parracombe Project. The aim of this activity is to ascertain whether it is possible, through objective analysis of the features of the very prominent hedge-banks, to develop a tool which will help us to unravel the evolution of the Parracombe field-systems. The development of such a tool falls within the research priorities highlighted in the recently formulated "Historic Environment Research Strategy for Exmoor" (Objective 8.i). To date nearly 300 boundaries have been recorded on East Middleton and Holworthy Farms. Now the data collected have been 'crunched' and some patterns have emerged. What do they tell us at Holworthy Farm?

At Holworthy 117 boundaries or boundary segments were recorded. The data recorded for each boundary include width through the base, width across the top, height from the ground on both sides, presence or absence of stone facing, style of facing, shrub and tree species present, evidence of hedge management, topography and relationship to other boundaries, watercourses, trackways or farm buildings. On the basis of the oft repeated remark, "You have to respect the work that went into these boundaries", it seems obvious that the quantity of material mounded up to make a hedge-bank must in some way reflect its importance and might also reflect a changing perception of land management. Therefore the dimensions have been selected as the parameters most likely to tell us something.

Clearly the present dimensions have to be regarded critically. We do not ignore the fact that during their existence the hedge-banks will have been subject to erosion and to some degree of remaking. But where a boundary has been well maintained, it seems probable that the amount of material present now is probably not greatly

different from what was first put in place.

Therefore if we measure width at base, width at top and height (averaging where the height on the two sides is different because of the slope of the ground) we have the dimensions of a cross-section which is essentially a trapezium. The area of a trapezium is base (b) plus top (t) times half the height (h) - see diagram. The resulting figure gives not only the area of cross section, but, when multiplied by 1, gives the volume per metre run in cubic metres. Thus a boundary with base of 3.0m, top of 2.0m and height of 1.5m has a volume of 3.75m³ per metre. Applying this simple formula to all the boundaries recorded and bearing in mind that this is not an exact science, the resulting figures are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, producing the basis of a simple numerical classification: Classes 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 based on volume (7m³ per metre is the largest we have found so far).

If we now apply this numerical classification to a map showing the boundaries of Holworthy Farm, patterns begin to emerge. There are few boundaries which are consistently of one class; what appears to be a single boundary can be a class 3 at some part(s) of its length and a class 4 at others. There is only one instance of a 2 juxtaposed to a 3. There is no example of a

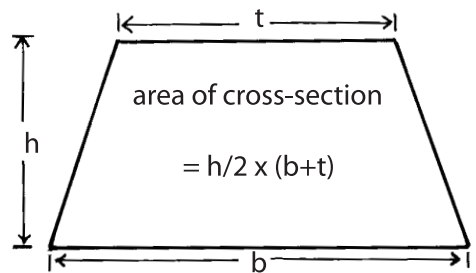


Fig.1: Area of a trapezium used to calculate the area of cross-section of a hedge-bank.

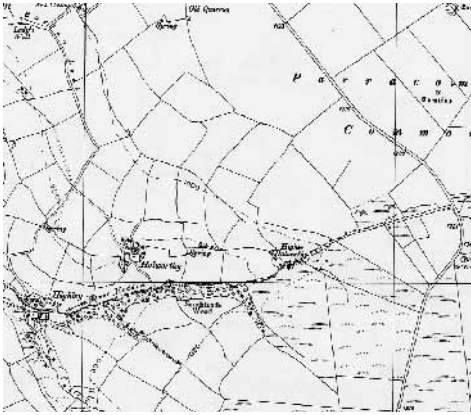


Fig.2: The boundaries of Holworthy Farm (and its neighbours) on the OS First Edition 6" map of 1890.

boundary being both a 2 and a 1. The 2's and 1's are restricted to either the boundaries which post-date the tithe map of 1840; or they are cornditches at the outer limits of the land that was enclosed before 1840. In addition they include one boundary which was present in 1840, but which, for certain reasons, is suspected to be a relatively late addition. The 3's and 4's are therefore characteristic of the land which was enclosed before 1840. The number of 5's, 6's and 7's is very small and is restricted to the land closest to the farm buildings. It begins to seem, therefore, that there is a group of slighter boundaries characteristic of recently enclosed land and a group of heavier boundaries associated with older enclosed land.

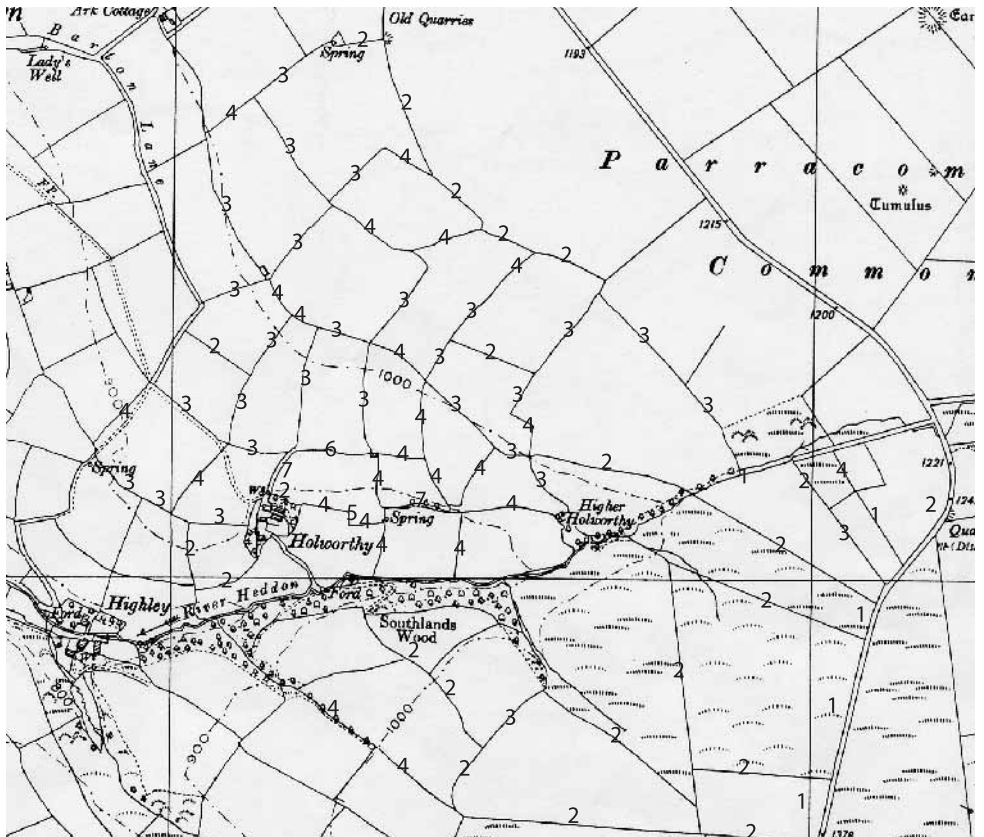


Fig.3: The boundaries of Holworthy Farm classified 1 - 7. (Some of the boundaries present in 1890 have since been removed).

If we now split up Class 3, consigning its lower end (2.6m^3 - 2.9m^3) to a class of slighter boundaries and its upper end to a class comprising all boundaries of 3.0m^3 per metre and over, we find that almost all the heavy boundaries lie together in the area which retrogressive map analysis would suggest is the early heart of the enclosed land.

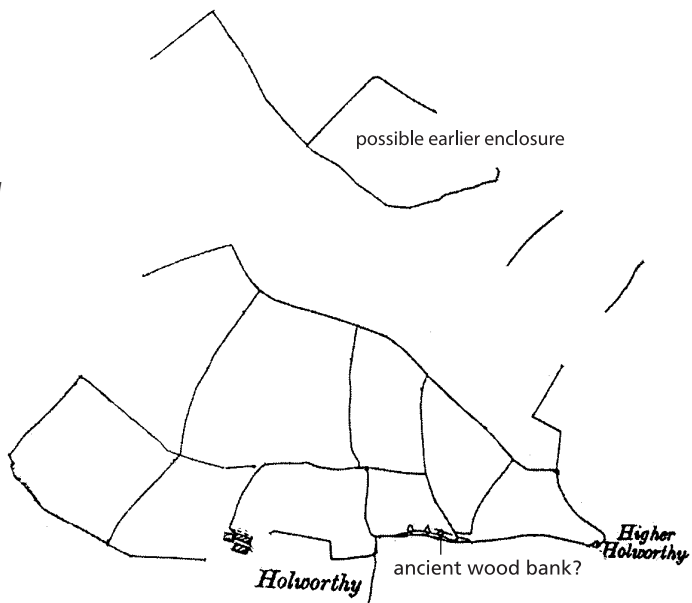
Does the analysis of field boundaries contribute anything new, therefore? Well, yes. It not only provides a physical complement to retrogressive map analysis, but can also spring surprises. Holworthy provides two examples.

Firstly, to the north of the early core of Holworthy land were formerly three fields (now two) which in the Tithe Apportionment are named West, East and Higher New Ground. West and East have slighter boundaries than those in the core, but Higher New Ground stands apart, having heavy hedge-banks all round (apart from on its northern edge where there is a cornditch). Map analysis might suggest, and now the boundary analysis seems to confirm that this is an earlier enclosure that has been incorporated into the 'New Ground', whenever that occurred. Secondly, the class 7 boundaries include one which, on the Tithe Map, is recorded as a narrow strip of

woodland. It is in fact a bank, however, measuring almost 5 metres through the base and 2 metres high with stone facing on both sides. It is one of the few which includes mature holly and is the only one with established bluebells. This looks more like a remnant of woodland and may represent an old wood bank remaining from before the development of Holworthy Farm, which is first recorded in 1213. This suggests that the farm may have been created through land clearance in the 12th/13th century.

Finally, on the subject of hedgerow species, people who know of the so-called Hooper rule, in which counting the species is supposed to provide an indication of age, will be interested to learn that the heftiest, apparently oldest boundaries are on the whole more species-rich than the more lightweight, younger examples. But, the species are still relatively few in number comprising at most seven, but including fast growing weed species such as elder, willow and sycamore. Apart from beech, which has been a popular choice for hedgerow planting since the 18th century, ash is the dominant species, many examples of which appear to be very old, having repeatedly grown out from massive stools. Oak is almost entirely absent.

Fig.4: All boundaries removed except those with a volume of 3.0m^3 per metre and above - this seems to define a core of old enclosed land as well as an isolated earlier enclosure to the north.



Recording a 19th Century Smithy at East Knowstone

Derry Bryant

In the last newsletter, members were asked to volunteer to help record the old smithy at East Knowstone - near South Molton. It has stood empty for many years, and was probably last used as a smithy in about 1963. The owner of the property had asked the North Devon Museum in Barnstaple if they would like to take the contents of the smithy before the building was sold. Colin Humphreys of South West Archaeology was going to record the building under the 'Community Archaeology' scheme, whereby the County Council will give a grant if local volunteers are asked to help, and the recording is used as a training exercise.

Wanting to 'have a go' at all aspects of

archaeology, I volunteered and, along with June Aiken, Jim Knights and Lynne Walmsley, arrived in East Knowstone on a cold Friday morning, armed with flasks, sandwiches and great enthusiasm!

From outside, the building resembles a small L-shaped barn with the long edge parallel to the road. The walls are rendered, with a stone base up to about 4ft, then cob up to the roofline. The front elevation includes a mullioned window and the double wooden doors at the front contained a 'moveable' central wooden post, which pivots up and down, presumably to allow carts to enter. The actual smithy containing the forge is in the foot of the 'L', going back onto the plot..It had thick cob



1. The East Knowstone forge as found.

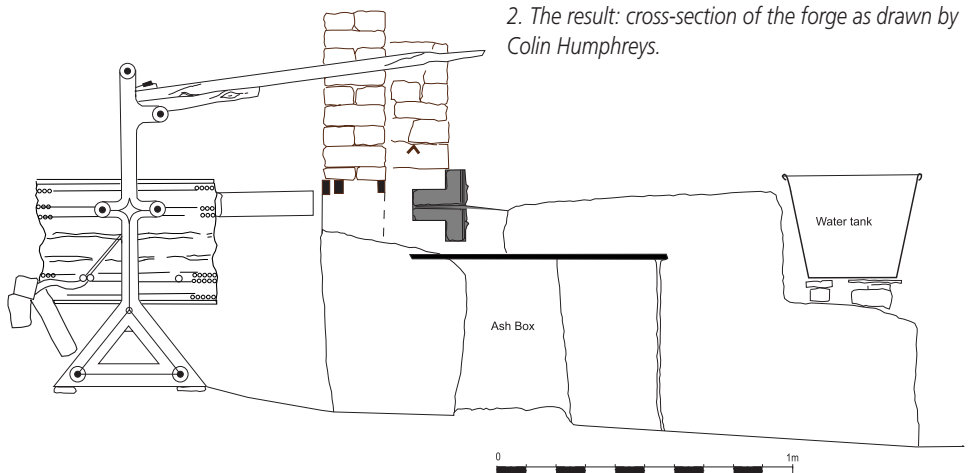
walls, and ivy creeping through the far end wall where the chimney would have been. The floor was cobbled, and although there was a window on either side, it was very dark. Most of the blacksmith's equipment was still in place with the cylindrical leather bellows still standing on its framework by the rear wall, the quenching trough at the end of the forge, and a huge anvil by the side. Lying around on windowsills, in boxes, and hanging from nails on the wall, were all the tools, tongs etc the smith would have used, as if the blacksmith had just gone for a walk!

We were plunged in at the deep end, receiving a rapid lesson in measuring up a building. I was elected to draw the building in plan, to scale, onto a large board, from measurements shouted out by the others. We measured length and thickness of walls, windowsills, and doorframes, and described materials used. We worked hard all day with a short break for lunch. We had to keep double-checking measurements to get angles right and I did quite a lot of rubbing out as I got some centimetres confused with metres!

We were invited for tea and cake by the fire with the owner, which was a most welcome but very short break, as we needed the daylight to see what we were doing. By the end of the day we had scrambled all around the building, but finally had a good ground plan and notes of the characteristics, thanks to Jim who came along with lots of knowledge of features of farm buildings.

On the Monday Colin and I returned in torrential rain to to add in details and to take photographs. I yelled out measurements so that Colin could draw in the forge in plan and elevation. It was cold and dark, but the roof held out, so it was reasonably dry. It took us all day, but the final detailed drawing was very satisfying.

It was a hectic and muddy two days but a great privilege to be able to see an old smithy with all the equipment still in place and to participate in recording a piece of rural history. Some documentary research would fill out more details of the building's history and maybe reveal personalities. Who, for instance was the "Bray" who carved his name on one of the doorposts?



2. The result: cross-section of the forge as drawn by Colin Humphreys.

First Outing with the Resistivity Metre

Trevor Dunkerley

Thanks to the Tarka Millennium Award Scheme, NDAS now has its own resistivity metre. Trevor Dunkerley and Jim Knights tried it out.

Having managed to put together the equipment which had arrived by parcel post, and made sure it was working, it was obviously necessary to try it out. We decided it was best to give it a go on a site which had previously been surveyed, so that we could check our results against something already known. We chose a site at Charles, near Brayford where Exeter Archaeology had already carried out a magnetometer survey. On March 10th 2004, therefore, a very cold, brisk day, I met Jim Knights at Charles where he had already marked out the corners of a 20m square. What would resistivity reveal?

We set about laying out the first of two 20m x 20m grids, inserting the probes at the prescribed distance from each other and from the grids. The meter was connected to the probes, and then began a frantic search through the instruction manual to determine how to start the machine. We had decided with the first grid to input each meter manually, before daring to venture into auto-mode, but how to start the wretched thing?! Then the penny dropped - just press the 'start grid' button! So off we went. Jim carried out the logging, and I ensured he could see the meter marks on the tapes and moved the tapes appropriately. The double beep of the machine at the end of each run assured us we were on the right track.

And so to grid two which had been set out adjacent to the first, By now the temperature on that exposed hillside was starting to plummet. Time for auto-mode - that should speed things up a little. Back to the manual, where we read, "Go to menu, then click with the + button to go into auto-mode". That didn't work! After several further attempts we put our heads together and



A cold day at Charles: Jim Knights striding out with the new resistivity metre.

once again the penny dropped - just press the OK button! So off Jim went up and down the grid.

After clearing up and cleaning tapes, pegs and probes, we set about trying to download into the laptop. Computers are great when they work, but for some reason this laptop would not recognise that we had connected the resistance meter into its USB port. Although no longer distracted by the cold - having moved into the warmth of Jim's home -our patience remained unrewarded: the laptop was being totally unco-operative! I knew this infernal machine would download into my own computer, so I sped home and after a quick connection, had the data snug and safe wherever such data goes to. But why wouldn't it connect with the laptop? Of course! We'd omitted to install the appropriate software!

And so finally we had the first NDAS resistance meter image - the two grids joined together and looked like, well, nothing much actually - just lots of shades of grey. Now comes the important part: filtering, clipping, and subtly manipulating. Yet more to learn. Still, if nothing else, at least we can say there is lots of resistance in Charles near Brayford.

Fish weirs update 4

Chris Preece

It is hoped that the fishweirs project will be concluded by the end of the year with academic publication, dissemination in a format more suited to the general public and C14 dating all needing discussion and agreement by the NDAS committee.

In terms of survey there only remains the south side of Horsey Weir to complete, but given the size of this structure and the shifting sand cover, more than one visit may be necessary. Three suitable early dates are the 5th and 6th of May, followed by the 4th June. Volunteers please contact me on 01237 475368 (otherwise conscription may be necessary!). Recording of Horsey will mean that three weirs of varying types will have been drawn to scale; an essential means of comparison with other published examples.

Following the reference in the Spring 2003 newsletter to a list of weirs on the Torridge (Bideford Weekly Gazette 1862), the observant and unremittingly enthusiastic NDAS member David Grenfell called me regarding stakes in the river bank near Landcross. Three of us (David, a badly trained dog and myself) went to investigate and returned more confused than when we set out. A dizzying array of stakes was visible; some straight lines angled from the top of the bank, some curved on the bend in the river and some encroaching towards the middle of the channel. Whether some or all were connected with fish entrapment is difficult to ascertain, but research in Northam has suggested that fish traps took many forms. Articles in the Bideford Gazette refer to fishing mill dams, fishing cruives, weirs, hutches, coops and fenders as well as the incongruous 'privileged engines'. Given the use of nets and rod and line as well, it is not surprising that an editorial of 1860 in the Gazette describes fishing as a "war of extermination" and decries the "murderous system pursued here".

Competing interests in a hierarchical society

meant that while the Salmon Fishery Acts 1861-1865 were intended to conserve stocks it seemed to be the poorest whose livelihood was most affected by restrictions. Capt. R.C. Whyte, conservator of the Taw and Torridge (who had taken it upon himself to destroy weirs and hutches on the Torridge in 1862) had a more ambivalent attitude towards the millowners: "very civil but fond of fish". By 1870 he was less indulgent, bemoaning the fact that contrary to the Act of 1861 the river at Beam weir was stopped up by boards in the grooves of the sluices and that "in the case of rain they (the fish) would all be found to pay the miller a visit". The owner of the mill, incidentally, was a JP and one of the board of Conservators. The indulgence allowed to the upper classes is exemplified by a newspaper reference to the illegality of using coops after 1st September: "Mr Rolle himself was restrained in this way and he had most liberally opened up his coops and let down a large supply." (Gazette; 22 July 1862).

The NDAS Pottery Day

Terry Green

On 7th February 2004 NDAS held a 'Pottery Recognition Training Day' at the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon. Originally this had been scheduled for last October, but for a variety of reasons was transposed to February. The initial

response to the October date had been poor, yet for February we had to turn people down. The day was very well attended with about 40 people crammed into a space that could only just cope.

As I'm sure you know, fragments of pottery



Oliver Kent pointing out details of pottery to June Aiken and Lizzie Bethune.

provide archaeologists with some of their most important dating evidence. In northern Europe clay has been shaped and baked into vessels since the Neolithic period, some 6,000 years ago. The earliest pottery we know from North Devon is a handful of very crude, probably Neolithic fragments dug up by Townshend-Hall on Baggy Point in the mid-19th century. Pottery, as we know, gets broken and ends up as rubbish discarded onto or into the ground. Unlike organic material, it is very durable and can stay in the soil for centuries or even millennia. A comparison between the dog-biscuit-like fragments from Baggy Point and the cup in your kitchen cupboard makes it very clear that over time methods of manufacture have evolved, the functions of pottery have changed and the "consumer" has looked for novelty. During the last 150 years a chronology of this evolution has been worked out, so that pottery found in association with other features can provide an indication of date.

Sherds of pottery must be the "finds" that we come across most commonly whenever we disturb the soil. The aim of the "pottery day" was to help members of the Society to interpret the sherds that they might find in their gardens, in the ploughsoil of a freshly turned field or even on a local beach. The problem in North Devon is that we are still waiting for a detailed chronology to emerge from the long-promised study of all the pottery that was dug up in Barnstaple and Bideford during the 1970's and 80's. Nevertheless, John Allen from the RAM Museum in Exeter kicked off the day by taking us on a visual tour of the types of pottery that commonly - and less commonly - occur in our part of the West Country. Oliver Kent, - who was instrumental in reconstructing the 17th century kiln now on display in the Museum in Barnstaple - talked us through methods of

manufacture, firing and finishing and discussed the trade in pottery that in the past took North Devon wares to Ireland, the Americas, the Caribbean and even to Australia.

The afternoon session was "hands-on". People were asked to divide into small groups at separate tables where each group was handed a bag of assorted pottery sherds with dates ranging from Romano-British 2nd/3rd century to early 20th century. These they were asked to examine, discuss, and, with the aid of guidelines provided by our two experts, to attempt to identify. People quickly became absorbed in the exercise, and while they were working John and Oliver went from group to group assisting the discussion. As the whole day was a crash course, it would not have been fair to expect instant accurate identifications; a rough chronology was enough. Most groups did very well, managing to pick out the Roman material, to sort medieval from post-medieval and to identify earlier and later glazes. Most even managed to pick out the "Joker" included in each collection, a piece of Totnes ware from South Devon or Donyatt ware from Somerset.

People certainly seemed to enjoy the day and we hope that they found it helpful. We are very grateful to John Allen and Oliver Kent for their very valuable contributions and to Alison Mills for making the facilities of the Museum available to us.

From the Bottom Up: Restoring the Holworthy Pot

Helena Jaeschke

From pictures taken and descriptions provided before the pot was removed from the ground, we already had a good idea of the nature of the object. Nevertheless there's always an intense amount of examination and discovery when an object first arrives at the conservation lab. In this case the object arrived from the excavation boxed in its soil block and protected in a plaster case. Our first move was to invert it, place it on a padded surface and carefully remove soil to reveal the base and assess its condition.

After several thousand years in a wet, acidic environment, the ceramic was very fragile. This is usually the combined effect of the clay having been fired to a rather low temperature and the dissolution of some of the temper used in its manufacture. If the pot had been allowed to dry out, the ceramic could have shrunk and crumbled away. To prevent this, the wet ceramic needed to be consolidated with a resin which provides strength as the water evaporates. The resin must be able to penetrate the ceramic evenly and remain stable, without changing colour, size or strength. For preference it must also be easily removable in future. Fortunately an excellent stable resin is available: Primal WS 24 is a colloidal dispersion of an acrylic resin, which can be diluted with distilled water for application, and which is soluble in acetone when dry. This solution was used on the Barnstaple kiln which was excavated in 1988 and is displayed in the Museum of North Devon.

As the soil was removed from the base, it was possible to see the nature of the surface on which the pot had been placed. Stones were found touching the base and sides, as though it had been laid on a stony surface, possibly in a stone-lined depression. When all the external soil had been removed (and bagged for later sieving) it was possible to see the size and shape of the pot, still upside down (see photo).



The pot revealed: With the soil removed, the pot is ready to be dismantled and rebuilt the right way up.

The pot was then turned right way up and supported while the soil inside was removed and put in separate bags for later examination. The only evidence of the vessel's use was a dark ring visible on the outside of the base. Consolidation was continued as each new area was exposed. When all the soil had been removed from the surfaces of the pot and the consolidated ceramic had dried, the individual sherds could be cleaned with swabs of acetone.

Although many of the fragments were in situ when found, they were separated by soil and roots which had to be removed before the pieces could be reattached. The cleaned sherds were joined together using a viscous solution of Paraloid B72, an acrylic copolymer resin. The stray sherds which had been separately removed from the ground were treated the same way, but were carefully numbered to show their original positions. Some joins were found between the sherds, but few could be found to join the actual pot. This was frustrating as these sherds included a fragment of rim and some decorated with diagonal parallel incisions.

Once the main pieces had been joined, some

gapfill was necessary to give the pot sufficient strength to withstand handling and display. The edges of the gaps which would be filled were protected with a thin layer of Paraloid B72. The gaps were then filled with Polyfilla, a commercial blend of plaster of Paris with cellulose powder. This was shaped and then painted with powder pigments mixed in a solution of Paraloid B72 in acetone to provide an overall match which can clearly be distinguished from the original. It is hoped that future work may enable more joins to be made and the rest of the pot to be rebuilt.

The reconstructed pot is now on display in the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon.



The pot displayed: After conservation and reconstruction, the pot awaits further work.

Fieldwork, Summer 2004

NB. These are all activities in which NDAS members can take part. Use the phone numbers given in order to volunteer.

Holworthy Farm:

The plan for 2004 is to open up a wider area of the site in order to gain a better understanding of this possible Bronze Age settlement. The first move will be a geochemical survey carried out by Chris Carey from Exeter University. This will complement the previous geophysical survey and will help us to focus our excavation. Digging will follow, starting on Monday 19th July, and aiming to finish on Saturday 31st July. The excavation will be under the supervision of Dr Martin Gillard (of English Heritage and Exeter University), though NDAS will provide overall direction. Martin will bring along a number of students from the University, but this is primarily a North Devon Archaeological Society dig on the first hillslope enclosure to be examined in North Devon - and only the second in Devon. Our probes so far have yielded brand-new information. We hope that this year's more extensive excavation will add a new chapter to the history of the North Devon landscape. *We still need volunteers. If you can spare anything from a couple of days to a whole fortnight in the second half of July to dig at Holworthy, please let us know well in advance.* Guidance and training will be provided. Phone Alistair on 01598 740359 or Terry on 01271 866662 or Colin on 01271 882152.

Combe Martin:

From the beginning of April, Trevor Dunkerley will be supervising excavation on behalf of the Combe Martin Silvermines Restoration and Preservation Society (CMSRPS) on land adjacent to Harris's Mine Shaft above Combe Martin. The objective this year is to ascertain the extent of the working-platform, to further investigate the horse-whim, to determine chronology and to examine the remains of a building in the corner of the field. The aim is also to provide a training opportunity for anyone wishing to try their hand at excavation. The

excavation will continue on Thursdays and Sundays through most of the summer. Anyone wishing to take the opportunity to learn how it's done should phone Trevor on 01271 883833.

Building Survey:

Further opportunities to experience and receive training in building survey will be available when we carry out measured surveys at Parracombe. Currently on offer are South Hill (next door to the Fox and Goose) and West Middleton Farm. Volunteers are invited to help. These surveys are currently scheduled for the weekends of 26th and 27th June and 11th and 12th September. Phone Colin Humphreys on 01271 882152 for more details and to volunteer.

Field Boundary Survey:

We should now finally get round to surveying the field-boundaries of West Middleton Farm at Parracombe. This activity involves a lot of walking and a certain amount of scrambling and clambering. Otherwise the ability to write and to read off measurements is all that's required. Currently proposed is the weekend 29th and 30th May. If you would like to take part, phone Terry Green on 01271 866662.

Field-Walking at Hatherleigh:

In May, the Hatherleigh Landscape Group is organising a field-walk on Hatherleigh Moor where Roman tile has recently been found. This will not be a field-walk in quite the usual sense, but more a search along the beds and banks of watercourses. A grid will also be set out for future geophysical survey. The field-walk will take place on the weekend of 22nd and 23rd May. Phone Deborah Laing-Trengove on 01837 810310 or Colin Humphreys on 01271 882152 for details.

Fish-weir survey:

The fish-weir survey is reaching a conclusion. There is more data collection to be done and so further survey is proposed for Friday 4th June (date determined by state of tide). If you are able to help, please contact Chris Preece on 01237 475368.

Photographing Listed Buildings:

As explained in the 'Images of England' piece in this newsletter, there is a need for volunteer photographers to add to the record of listed buildings in the county. If you are a keen photographer and would like to exercise your skills in a good cause, please telephone 01793 414643 or e-mail: ioevolunteers@english-heritage.org.uk.

Volunteering on Exmoor:

Anyone wishing to join a list of volunteers willing to assist with the maintenance of Exmoor's archaeological sites should contact Jessica Cowley on 01398 323334.

A History of Hele: A new Website

John Moore

John Moore is a member of NDAS, who formerly owned a caravan site at Hele Bay near Ilfracombe. Wishing to answer his visitors' questions authoritatively, he set about researching the history of the area. This has resulted in the creation of a new website dedicated to the history of Hele. It can be seen online at <http://hele.mysite.freeserve.com>. The website is the result of a two-year project aided by a Tarka Country Millennium Award, funded by the Millennium Commission via the Lottery.

The website contains a lot of historical information relating to Hele, Ilfracombe and the surrounding area. It is divided into about 30 'pages': representing different historical periods from the Palaeolithic to the present day, and various themes, concerning, e.g., Hillsborough hillfort, smuggling, lime-burning, shipwrecks, Turnpike Trusts, etc.

For NDAS members the most interesting feature is probably the list of references at the end of every page, which often includes quotes from source publications. Originally recorded to support a poor memory, they were included because they provide a useful 'historical resource'.

A Very Short History of Hele

The valley of Hele (NGR SS53-47-) occupies a 'triangle' between two hill ranges and the coast. The hill ridges either side are thought to be ancient ridgeway routes and are still used today (Old Barnstaple Road and Oxenpark Lane). Hele seems to have developed within these boundaries, in several stages, during which the focus of the community moved up and down the valley.

The earliest evidence of people are a few flints found on Hillsborough, but the first known occupation site is Hillsborough *promontory fort*, probably built during the late Iron Age and abandoned around 50 AD. This is the only current



Part of Hele today seen from the ramparts of Hillsborough promontory fort

evidence of settlement in Hele until the Saxon period.

Domesday refers to the Manor of *Hele* (from Old English *healh* and meaning 'at the sheltered valley') as being held by *Edwy* in 1066. This Manor was probably a couple of kilometres inland, at or near Comyn farm, south of which are several fields called *Yarde* on old maps (from OE *gyrt*, meaning 'a cultivated area'). Around 1160, the Manor was granted to the Champernoun's, who may have founded Chambercombe Manor nearby.

Helemyll was 'newly built' in 1525, further down the valley nearer to the sea. The Medieval

village of Hele grew between it and the farm of *Hele Bay Estate* (later demolished to build the Gas Works). The first structures near the beach were lime-kilns and although the extensive coastal quarries were worked until at least the 1890's, Hele was still regarded as a rural idyll in the 1850's.

The Turnpike road (opened 1868), Ilfracombe Gas Works (opened 1905) and tourism since WW2, are some of the principal economic drivers behind the development of present-day Hele Bay. The focus of the community has now returned to the coast, almost in the shadow of the ancient promontory fort, after nearly 2,000 years.

Community Landscapes Project: Update and Prospects

Sean Hawken



NDAS out with CLP: David Grenfell learning to survey with a “total station” at Bursdon in Hartland Parish.

Since its inception in 2001, this Devon-wide project, representing a collaboration between the University of Exeter and Devon County Council and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the University of Exeter & Devon County Council, has focused on areas of Devon which hitherto had received little archaeological attention. Landscape studies were set up in five areas of Devon: the Blackdown Hills, the Clyst Valley, parts of the South Hams, Rackenford/Knowstone Moors and Hartland Moors. The aim was to increase the opportunities for public participation in the archaeological sciences. Compensating for the inability of the major archaeological societies and

the local authority archaeological services to meet the requests of local groups for help, the CLP has enabled a large number of people to become involved in earthwork survey, documentary research, environmental sampling, inputting information into a GIS data-base and receiving training in laboratory techniques.

Now the Community Landscapes Project is in its final phase. While there is still a very small amount of fieldwork to complete in the Blackdown Hills, this phase principally involves assembling and disseminating the results of work to date. There are drawings to complete, data to enter, aerial photographs to examine and final

radiocarbon dates to collect. Then, of course, everything has to be written up and published.

During its lifetime the Project has enthused people throughout the county. The permanent staff of the Project have gone out to village halls and farmhouse kitchens in the study areas and beyond carrying the message, that it is possible for local people to participate in researching the history and archaeology of their locality and to make genuine discoveries. Such discoveries are not necessarily headline material, but are steps in understanding how settlements and communities evolved. People have learned where to look and how to understand what they see.

So where does the Project go from here? Currently, funding is being sought in order to continue the valuable work that has been done. A new project would be different, however. During its brief life this project has developed a methodology and expertise which can be applied anywhere where there is interest and need. So, rather than academically determining which areas should be investigated, a future project would invite any local group to seek help and guidance from the Project staff in furthering their researches. The CLP staff could provide specialist services such as geophysics and palaeoenvironmental work, where these are required, or could train non-specialists in the use and interpretation of, for example, geophysical survey. Thus groups at Winkleigh or Hatherleigh or Parracombe or Brayford or anywhere else could call upon CLP to help them with a landscape project, whenever special expertise was found to be desirable. Sean Hawken who heads CLP would welcome your support in this and would be glad to receive any letters of encouragement. Write to Sean Hawken, Community Landscapes Project Office, Archaeology Dept, Laver Building, North Park Road, University of Exeter, EX4 4QE or e-mail: s.d.hawken@exeter.ac.uk.

Fund-raising:

Derry Bryant is our new fund-raiser, she has an appeal to members:

As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, we will be returning to dig at Holworthy (Parracombe) in July, this time on a much grander scale. We shall employ a professional site-supervisor who will need to be paid; we shall hire portaloos (hurrah, I shan't have to embarrass any more sheep), and we shall need more tools (See below for a list). And then after the dig there are the post-excavation costs. We are, of course, applying for grants from major funding bodies and have had some success, but we are not yet in a position to cover all of the potential costs. At present most of our available funds come from subscriptions which, at the new subscription rate, should be adequate for day-to-day running of the Society, paying for visiting speakers, hire of premises, insurance, etc., but will still leave us little leeway for supporting archaeology in the area, publicising our activities or funding our own research. We could do with raising additional cash.

Members and friends can help in lots of ways within their own communities. Raffles, pub quizzes, car boot sales, coffee mornings, cake stalls, garden open-days are just a few of the ways money can be raised. Can you help? Do you have any ideas? If you can help in any way, please contact any committee member or Derry Bryant on 01769 572963

Tools:

If you have any tools for which you have no further use and which are still serviceable, you could perhaps help out by donating them to the Society. Principally we could do with shovels (standard or Devon long-handled), mattocks (also called 'two-bills'), sharp spades, wheelbarrows, buckets, seed-trays, even packs of freezer-bags, nails (4 inch) and nylon string. If you are able to donate any, please call Derry Bryant on 01769 572963.

Hatherleigh Landscape Group

Deborah Laing-Trengove

The past year has moved at a fairly sedate pace for the group. Most of our monthly meetings have been taken up with transcribing details from the Hatherleigh Tithe Apportionment onto A3 copied sheets of the Tithe Map itself, allowing us easy access to information for future research. This work is now all but complete.

At our January meeting we called on Terry Green and Colin Humphreys of NDAS to talk to us about field-names and to inspire us as to what to do next! Although nothing concrete was decided at the meeting, the conversation over a pint in the local pub afterwards did inspire me to re-examine some tiles that I had found whilst walking over our local common, Hatherleigh Moor. Out of an initial small collection of rather amorphous pieces, one diagnostic piece has now been confirmed by John Allen to be part of a Roman box-flue tile (*tubulus*). This type of tile, which is literally box-shaped, would have formed part of a hypocaust system, functioning as a conduit for warm air and smoke within the walls of a building. Typically the tiles have a surface scored with irregular wavy lines (combing) to provide a key for wall plaster. A further look at the find-spot yielded pieces of roof tile (*tegula* and *imbrex*) as well as plain tiles that would have been stacked in *pilae* to support the floor.

The ceramic evidence, the close proximity to water and a large extant pit several metres from the finds all pointed towards an industrial kiln site. Bill Horner visited the site in early March and provisionally confirmed it to be a tiliary. Only about a hundred of this type of site are known in the country and only one other in Devon (Exeter). Clearly this is a very exciting find for us because, as we were all long aware, "the Romans never got this far"! As the site will need to be more thoroughly investigated, it is my hope that as much of the work as possible will be carried out

by local societies and professionals. To make a start we are holding a weekend of field-walking in May. Members of NDAS are invited to join us. (For details see 'Fieldwork this summer' elsewhere in this newsletter.)

Looking toward the longer term, we are hoping to get a buildings project going in Hatherleigh to learn more about the development of the town and the buildings within it. We plan to survey the Bridge Inn in May/June as a taster and to provide some initial training.

Finally, I must say thank you to everyone for making me welcome at my first NDAS committee meeting. I look forward to greater involvement in the Society's activities and hope to see some of you in Hatherleigh in the near future.

Diana Warmington from Bideford writes

I have accumulated loads of archaeology magazines, mainly 'Popular Archaeology', and have got to turn them out now as there is a space shortage at my home! Are they of use to anyone? They go back a few years, of course, but it seems a shame to dump them. Any offers? I have about 30 or so. I will deliver, of course.

Diana W.
Telephone: 01237 472336

The Portable Antiquities Scheme and the role of the Finds Liaison Officer

Nicola Powell (Finds Liaison Officer for Devon)

As you already know, the Portable Antiquities Scheme is a voluntary scheme for the recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public. The scheme was established to promote the recording of chance finds and to broaden public awareness of the importance of such finds for understanding our past.

The government recognised that there was an urgent need to improve arrangements for recording all 'portable antiquities' which fell outside the scope of the Treasure Act 1996, and as a result, the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) was established. In 1997 the Department of Culture, Media and Sport provided funding to institute pilot schemes for the voluntary recording of archaeological objects in six regions. Another five pilot schemes were established five years later. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and supported by museums, city and county councils around England and Wales, the scheme went country wide (except Scotland where the law is different) at the end of 2003 and I was extremely pleased to be appointed Finds Liaison Officer for Devon.

Devon had a head start, in the form of Gary Saunders who started recording metal detected finds as part of his archaeology degree at Exeter University. He and the Cookworthy Museum in Kingsbridge received a grant from the PAS to carry out the work. The Finds Liaison Officer for Somerset and Dorset, Ciorstaidh Hayward Trevarthen, had also made contact with metal detecting clubs in Devon and built up some really good relationships.

So the idea of reporting metal detected and chance finds was getting established in Devon. Our primary role is to make the PAS known and record finds. I am based at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter, but make visits to museums, clubs, societies and people's homes to record their finds. So far, the artefacts that have

been reported to me have been found in a variety of different ways; walking the dog, at the beach, gardening and as part of an archaeological investigation as well as those found during metal detecting. So far we have recorded more than 60,000 archaeological artefacts and another 60,000 on paper. The database is available to everyone for research or just for interest (www.finds.org.uk). Do take a look at it!

I can be contacted at The Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Queen Street, Exeter, EX4 3RX and by phone on 01392 665983. My email address is nicola.powell@exeter.gov.uk

Exmoor Archaeological Volunteers

Archaeological work within Exmoor National Park is becoming more and more comprehensive, and there is a need for volunteer assistance. Jessica Cowley, who is Countryside Archaeological Adviser in the National Park Office, intends to set up an Archaeological Volunteer Group to undertake a variety of tasks across the National Park. These would include monitoring and surveying the condition of monuments, getting out and helping to clear scrub and gorse, providing assistance on open days, etc. Volunteers would meet once a month. Tasks would obviously be arranged to suit individual abilities and preferences. Anyone who is interested in volunteering or would like to know more is asked to contact Jessica Cowley on 01398 323334

Bringing The Romans Up To Date

Rob Wilson-North & Jessica Cowley

A diary date for NDAS members is Saturday 12 June 2004 when members of the Ermine Street Guard will be setting up camp on the Roman fortlet at Old Burrow on the spectacular Exmoor coastline.

The Ermine Street Guard's visit to Exmoor is also part of a wider educational project to help people find out more about Exmoor's archaeology through the use of new technology, teaching and good old fashioned re-enactment. The sites chosen for the project are the two Roman fortlets at Old Burrow and Martinhoe. These two fortlets have received much attention in the past: St George Gray excavated at Old Burrow in 1911 and Lady Aileen Fox dug both in the 1960s, and established that they date from the second half of the 1st century AD. There is also a good collection of finds in the North Devon Museum.

The project will result in a CD to be incorporated in North Devon Museum's 'The Romans in North Devon' teachers' pack for local schools. The CD will also include English Heritage's air video of the site, an archaeological history of both sites, and video footage of the Ermine Street Guard at Old Burrow in June 2004. In addition to

the CD, A-level archaeology students at West Somerset College will receive a teaching module on the conservation of archaeological sites and computer reconstruction techniques, whilst the filming of the Ermine Street Guard will be undertaken by a student from the University of Bristol as part of his MA course in Screen Media. 500 CDs will be given away free to local schools, colleges and other educational establishments. The reconstruction will then become part of Exmoor National Park Authority's interpretation resource.

NDAS members are warmly invited to the event on Saturday 12 June. It will be open from 11am - 3pm. Please come to the County Gate visitor centre car park (SS 793 487).

This project is being run by Exmoor National Park Authority with the help of North Devon Museum, the University of Exeter and the National Trust. It is funded by Exmoor's Sustainable Development Fund.

Old Burrow is on private land, but access is granted by kind permission of Messrs Ben and George Halliday; Martinhoe is owned by the National Trust and is accessible from the South West Coast Path from Heddon's Mouth.

Images of England

Could you help with photographing listed buildings?

Images of England, funded by English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund, aims to create a point in time photographic record of England's listed buildings. The project began in 1999 and since then our volunteer photographers have been busy photographing the thousands of listed structures across the country.

The photographic survey has become one of

the largest and most ambitious recording projects of its type ever carried out in England. When the single exterior photograph of each listed structure has been taken, processed, scanned and quality assured it is placed on the *Images of England* website alongside its statutory list description. Although the amount of information contained within each list

description may vary they usually provide a statement of the building type and generally include details on any important architectural features. The list descriptions detail not only architecturally important aspects of the structure but also historically significant facts. For example, the *Images of England* database can be searched for "associated people". A search for listed structures associated with the great British engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel brings back results that include, not only bridges and railway stations, but also his home in Chelsea and tomb in Kensal Green Cemetery.

It isn't just houses that feature amongst the 370,000 listed structures on the website. Windmills, railway stations, milestones, lavatories and post-boxes sit side by side together with churches, castles, country houses and cottages. When complete *Images of England* will offer a unique and comprehensive photographic record of England's architectural heritage.

Over 90,000 images taken for the project, including over 3,500 from Devon, can be viewed directly on the *Images of England* prototype website at www.imagesofengland.org.uk. Devon has over 20,000 listed buildings, so there is still a lot of work yet to be done!

Do you think you could take good photographs of listed buildings? If you do then *Images of England* needs you! *Images of England* is looking for people who would like to become volunteer photographers for the project. The areas where we specifically need people are Crediton, Tiverton, Barnstaple and Okehampton but you should be prepared to travel as there may be buildings to photograph further afield. For more information about what is involved please contact the project by telephone on: 01793 414643 or by e-mail: ioevolunteers@english-heritage.org.uk

A New Member's Experience

David Grenfell

In July 1995 I spent six enjoyable days at a Summer School course in Excavation Techniques at Bignor Roman Villa in West Sussex, a few miles from the village of Storrington where I then lived. The course, designed to introduce students to the major analytical aspects of archaeology, was managed by the Field Archaeology Unit of the Institute of Archaeology, University of London. The site Director was David Rudling.

Bignor Villa, discovered in 1811 and owned by the Tupper Family, is one of the largest known in Roman Britain, encompassing an area of nearly two hectares. It has many fine fourth century mosaics and lies close by Stane Street just under the north slope of the South Downs. Chichester, the Roman *Noviomagus Regnensium*, is approximately 16 kilometres to the south west.

The course, which was blessed by uncharacteristic high 70's sunshine, provided an introduction to the whole gamut of excavation techniques, including the use of a metal detector as an aid to surveying. I will not bore you with a detailed account of the daily activities. I'm sure you will be familiar with such things as: the advantages of using a Hymack with a toothless bucket against a mattock when removing over burden (did I hear someone saying "I wish"?) Or the importance of inspecting garderobe pits for evidence of parasite eggs (please do not ask why!) Suffice it to say that each day was filled with instructive tutoring and much activity.

There was also plenty of entertainment from the public! One event still amuses me. I was happily trowelling away at my corner of the inner courtyard when I heard an officious "excuse me!" I looked up to see two Barber-clad middle-aged couples peering down at me. I asked if I could help and received a reply from one of the ladies, that, no I could not, but that

her husband could certainly help us. Husband then explained that he had the ability to see beneath the soil and knew what we were digging for and exactly where it was. He then proceeded to an area, that had been excavated last season, pointed dramatically to the ground and informed me that he could see two flights of stone steps descending about 10 feet to a circular walled area with a small fountain in the centre. Concealed in a secret chamber beneath this fountain was the gold! No prizes for guessing my reply - all two words of it!

With a site such as Bignor and tutors and entertainers of high calibre, I and my 17 fellow students were well pleased with our £95.00 investment.

Bignor (grid reference SU 987147) is open March to October and well worth a visit - Telephone: 01798 869259 .

The Summer School is still offering Excavation Technique courses but as Bignor is now completed they have moved on to a new Roman site at Hassocks near Lewes in East Sussex - Web: www.archaeologyse.co.uk.

A cry for help

Carol Rush, who is volunteers co-ordinator at the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon, needs assistance "front-of-house". Carol asks if any members of NDAS would be able to volunteer their assistance meeting and greeting visitors to the Museum on Monday and/or Wednesday mornings. If you think you could help out, phone Carol Rush on 01271 346747 or email carroll.rush@northdevon.gov.uk.

Dates for Your Diary

May - September 2004

(For details see Fieldwork, Summer 2004)

22nd & 23rd May: Field-walking at Hatherleigh Moor

29th & 30th May: Field-boundary survey at West Middleton Farm, Parracombe.

4th June: Fishweir survey

12th June: Open Day and Demonstration by the Ermine Street Guard at Old Burrow Roman fortlet, 11.00 am - 3.00 pm. Please come to the County Gate visitor centre carpark (SS 793 487).

26th & 27th June: Building Survey at Parracombe.

19th to 31st July: Excavation at Holworthy Farm, Parracombe. There will be an Open Day for NDAS members on Sunday 25th July; access via the field gate at SS688455 - park (considerately) on the roadside.

22nd August: Open Day at Teigncombe roundhouse, Sandy Gerard's excavation near Chagford. Open from 10.00am to 5.00pm, location SX66808655

11th & 12th September: Building Survey at Parracombe.

Devon Archaeological Society Summer Programme

(with special 75th Birthday features):

25th May: DAS joint meeting with the Classical association. Dr Ray Laurence, University of Reading: *Pompeii, Nero's City of Venus*. 5.00 pm, Queen's Building, University of Exeter.

27th May: Seminar at Berkeley House, Dixes Field, Exeter, 7.00 - 9.00 pm: *The Archaeology of Devon in the Bronze Age*. Frances Griffith. Prior booking essential, 01392 257884 (Sheila Gibbons)

6th June: Field visit to Dartmoor with Debbie Griffiths and Jane Marchand. Details and booking Janet Cambridge 01752 669737

22nd June: Seminar at Berkeley House, Dixes Field, Exeter, 7.00 - 9.00 pm: *The Archaeology of Devon in the 1st Millennium BC*. Henrietta Quinnell. Prior booking essential, 01392 276731 (Ena Doak)

8th July: DAS hillfort clearance working party. Hembury Hillfort near Honiton (meet NGR ST112031). Contact David Fitter, 01805 804261 for details.

19th - 23rd August: DAS weekend trip to Brittany. For details phone Helena Matthew on 01803 323177.

15th September: DAS Birthday Event: 'Behind the Scenes at Torquay Museum', 8.30 pm. A chance to see the Kent's Cavern collection and the Pengelly Diaries. Phone 01803 293975 to book a place.

Members might also like to take note of the following events culled from the "Exmoor Visitor":

25th May: "Out of this World and into Mansley Combe": an archaeological and ecological walk with Rob Wilson-North and Alison Cox. Meet Dunkery Hill Gate SS896406 at 11.00 am. 4 hours' walking, picnic and good walking gear.

20th June: "Exmoor through the Ages": a walk from Simonsbath with a National Park ranger, passing sites ranging from prehistoric to the present and learning how man has shaped the landscape. Meet Ashcombe car park, Simonsbath SS774395 at 10.00 am. 7 hours' walking, picnic and good walking gear.

26th June: "Porlock Bay: an Evolving Coastline": A National Trust walk incorporating archaeology, history and coastal ecology. Cost £3.00 (£1.00), meet Bossington, SS897479 2.00 pm. Booking essential, phone 01643 862452.

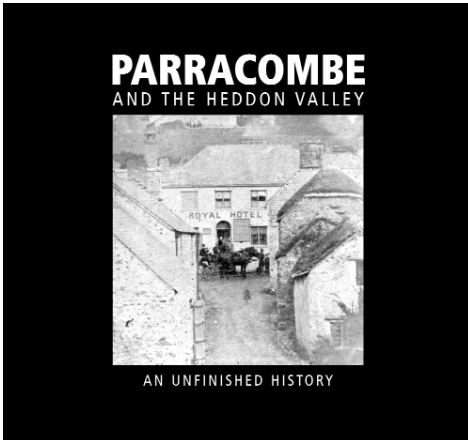
23rd July: "Prehistoric Pinkery": a walk with a National Park archaeologist comprising Woodbarrow, the Longstone, Chapman Barrows. Meet Goat Hill Bridge SS724405 at 11.00 am. 4 hours' walking, picnic and good walking gear.

12th August: "Moorland Archaeology": a comprehensive walk through 4,000 years of Exmoor's archaeology with Rob Wilson-North. Quite an arduous walk. Meet Brendon two Gates SS765433 at 10.30 am. 5 - 6 hours' walking, picnic, good walking gear.

A New Book

Parracombe and the Heddon Valley -

An Unfinished History



A new book covering the history and archaeology of the Parracombe area is available from the Parracombe Archaeology & History Society. The book has taken over two years to research and write and is illustrated with a wealth of photographs of the people and history of Parracombe.

The project consists of an ongoing collection of oral histories and the continued building of a photographic archive. These have formed the basis of this book.

Copies are available at £5.00 each, plus £1.00 post & packing, from PAHS. Details below

Softback, size 198mmx210mm (approx 8"x 8 1/4"), 96 pages, black and white throughout with over 65 pictures.

June Aiken, Secretary to PAHS, Evenlode, Church Lane, Parracombe, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 4QJ
Tel: 01598 763316

Cheques should be made payable to:
Parracombe Archaeology & History Society

Grants Received

We are pleased to inform members that we have been successful in securing grant aid to support the survey, excavation and post-excavation work at Holworthy Farm. We are grateful to the following for their financial assistance: The Exmoor Trust, the Royal Archaeological Institute, the Council for British Archaeology and the North Devon District Council (Community Grants). These funds are provided specifically for the furtherance of the Holworthy Project.