

Hello everybody

Although it was touch-and-go, I'm relieved that we didn't have to cancel a second monthly meeting due to ice and snow, on top of cancellation of a fieldwalk, and we had a very good turnout for Anne Teather's talk on Prehistoric Orkney. However, at the time of writing the forecast is for unseasonably cold weather, with the possibility of further snow, to carry on until late April, so I'm proposing that we restart the fieldwalk programme on Sunday April 22nd with the look at the field system in Whitfield we were planning to visit in December before it snowed. At the next monthly meeting on April 3rd, Tim Campbell-Green will be talking about the Whitfield Cross, and if time permits we'll have a look at that as well. So far, we've inspected the Roman road at Crowden, in a gale, and Hadfield centre and Mouselow (no wind, rain or snow, just mud) and the next objective after Whitfield will be the "Bennett's Mills" site in Old Glossop, the overall aim being to evaluate the potential of these sites for serious investigation.

Plans for pre-nesting-season clearance at Melandra had to be abandoned for reasons other than the weather, but Paul Beckmann is hoping that work can resume in September when the birds have flown, and there will be a call for volunteers in due course. Although we're looking at other sites we haven't forgotten about the fort, and there will be a discussion at the next committee meeting in June about what we can do, within the resources we have, to bring it more into the public eye. In the meantime, many artefacts from the site are now on display in the revamped "Wonders of the Peak" gallery at Buxton Museum, and we've exchanged fraternal greetings, with an eye to future co-operation, with the newly-formed Buxton Roman Society, which aims to "*explore, discover and promote the rich Roman history in the bathing and trading settlement of Aquae Arnemetiae.*"

Melandra will also feature in a presentation I'm giving at the Glossop Heritage Trust's spring Open Evening on Tuesday April 17th (7.30, Central Methodist Church, Chapel Street). The title is "Some aspects of the archaeology of Glossop and district" and GLAS members will be very welcome. However, those of you who've been regular attenders at our monthly meetings need to be aware that it's just a compilation of stuff you'll already have seen, the aim being to bring it to a wider audience as part of the heritage-awareness-raising which the Trust needs to do as a partner in the Glossop Halls Project. The aim of the project is to restore the historic "Town Hall Complex" (Town Hall, Market Hall and Municipal Buildings) and bring the Town Hall back into use, and it's taking up an increasing amount of my and Mike Brown's time, but at the end of it we should have a "heritage centre for the 21st century" which is an Arts Council-accredited museum and which potentially can bring back to Glossop some of the Melandra artefacts now in Buxton and elsewhere and take new finds from local sites which would otherwise have to leave the area.

And we have a possible new local site. Kath Siddall has spotted on the slopes above Charlesworth/Chisworth what looks suspiciously like another Bronze Age cairn, and volunteers are needed to dig an initial evaluation trench to establish whether it's what it appears to be (or if not, is maybe something else of archaeological interest). In the meantime, its working title is "Cairn no 2." The dig leader will be Peter Noble, and the aim is to do the work over approximately two weeks in mid-May. Final dates and the extent of the work will, however, be very dependent on the number of volunteers, so if you're interested, please email Maxine as soon as possible indicating how many days you could do and whether during the week, at weekends, or both. Parking and facilities are very limited so a shuttle service will be in operation to take volunteers to the site, which is a very short level walk from the parking area.

Whatever "Cairn no 2" turns out to be, it's already clear we have a significant "Bronze Age landscape" on the high ground which runs north from Shaw Cairn and Mellor Moor to Coombes Edge above Charlesworth, and more finds are possible. We've made some amazing discoveries on lower

ground in the last two years since we first got access to Lidar data, but the present coverage, being targeted at areas liable to flooding, doesn't cover the hills which comprise most of our area. However, in January the Environment Agency announced that by 2020 the rest will be included, which opens up the possibility of spotting many more suspicious bumps on the tops which can't be seen on air photos or from lateral views.

We won't, though, be able to do anything about them unless we have enough people to do the organising. Since the Society began, Lorraine has acted as treasurer, membership secretary and our main organiser of digs, which is too many roles for one person, but we haven't so far had any volunteers to take on the financial and membership responsibilities, which are essential if the society is to continue, and I very much hope that this is something we can resolve before the AGM in September.

However, one element of our organisation *is* developing. We've had a website for several years - <http://www.glossoparchaeology.org/> - but haven't made much use of it, but Sue and Steve Miall have now taken charge and are beginning to populate it, and have also added a Facebook group, <https://www.facebook.com/GlossopArchaeology>, on which they're now posting news items, including some I've referred to above. Most societies these days have a combination of a website with basic information for enquirers, and a Facebook group which contains news and notices and which gives members the opportunity to communicate with one another, and I hope that people will now start using it. Although I can understand, especially in view of recent events, why people may be wary of Facebook, if used positively it's a tremendously effective medium both for increasing activity within societies and communicating to the wider world, and the Heritage Trust now relies heavily on it as a means of fostering interest in and increasing knowledge of the heritage of the area.

I hope to see you at the Bluebell Wood on April 3rd, and at Whitfield on the 22nd.

Best wishes

Roger