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CLARO COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP NEWSLETTER

September 2010

The objectives for this project include involvement of the local community in building up knowledge of local heritage and ensuring continued interest in the work in the future. In this edition we look at the activities of our Rapid Response Team, giving an important role to local farmers. We are also calling for help from readers in identifying images from the late 1940s.

Learning a Lot from Buttons

Our stock of finds includes a varied collection of buttons. We have had the benefit of expert opinion from Ian Scott of the Button Society in identifying and dating these items, from which we can add something to our knowledge about Scriven in earlier times. Looking at our stock, Ian was able to tell us the difference between a button, badge and brooch. He also pointed out the features of buttons, materials, designs, ornament or utility. Most interesting for us, buttons have been identified from the uniforms of servants visiting Scriven Hall from other stately homes such as Bramham, Allerton Park and Harewood. These are all part of our overall picture.

We have future plans for detailed identification of lead tokens, flax seals and buckles.



19th Century Baronet
Livery Button
Allerton Park



19th Century Ducal
Livery Button
Bull's Head & Coronet



19th Century Hound
Sporting button worn
by Gentry



Rapid Response Team

As this study has progressed we have become aware of the seasonality of landscape archaeology, not only the difficulties of observing features when obscured by vegetation but also the imperative need to fit in with the time table of the farming year. In fact we have learned a lot about modern farming methods. We are dependent on the goodwill of farmers and landowners, never proceeding without full permission. We have been very fortunate in gaining the cooperation and interest of farmers. There is sometimes a very small window of time between farming activities for a team to get into the field for walking and recording features together with dowsing, metal detecting, auguring and sometimes a small amount of excavation.

A farmer provided us with such an opportunity recently, giving us the chance to explore a possible prehistoric site. We were able to respond, at short notice, with a team for field walking, auguring, dowsing, excavating and metal detecting, under the direction of Kevin Cale of Community Archaeology Ltd. assisted by CARET (Community Archaeology Roving Excavation Team). We were accompanied by our photographer, Thomas Baxter. The team worked from early afternoon until dusk, to make maximum use of the small window of time. They are shown at work below.

There was a small collection of finds on the site, but no major discoveries. However, the techniques were tested and the system worked. We are ready for next time. We emphasise that these events only take place with the express permission of the farmer and landowner. Thanks to the members of CARET who responded at such short notice.





Can You Help Us?

We are very interested in the history of Scriven Hall, which was home to the Slingsby family. The hall burned down in 1952, having been used for military purposes during the Second World War and also as a prisoner of war camp and as a camp for displaced persons. We do know that the camp was still in use into the early 1950s. We have some information about the early history of the house, but we have little concrete evidence of the history during and immediately after the War.

We have recently acquired a collection of photographs seeming to date back to the 1940s, which we believe to have been taken in Knaresborough. The photos include a shot of the frozen River Nidd, possibly taken during the winter of 1947, giving a clue to the rest of the set. The photographs were discovered in South Wales and came with no further information.

There are some intriguing images of a model of HMS Vanguard. We would be interested to hear of any connection between this ship and Knaresborough.

There are also pictures of prisoners of war identified by diamond patch on the trousers. Some of these pictures seem to have been taken in the same setting, which includes an imposing doorway and two large windows. The building is built of brick, which seems to rule out Scriven Hall itself. We are hoping to identify the setting as somewhere within Knaresborough. Overleaf, we include a photograph of prisoners of war against this background.

If you can throw any light on this, or if you have any other information relating to Scriven Hall at this time, please could you contact us at the undercroft of Knaresborough Court House Museum on a Thursday, either in person or on our mobile phone 07751232170, which has a message facility.

Otherwise you can contact us via our email address.



Do you recognize this background?



**History and Heritage in the
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