



CLARO COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

Welcome to our readers old and new. We are a group of volunteers, working under the guidance of a professional archaeologist, Kevin Cale. The group has been working from a base in Knaresborough Courthouse for the past twenty years. This venue has been made available to us by the generosity of Harrogate Borough Council. We have undertaken a range of projects, most recently in the field of landscape archaeology. We are currently working on a project entitled Scriven and its Park. We have been very fortunate to receive a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to cover four years work on the study.

INTRODUCING OURSELVES

We are a mixed group of people from all walks of life, bringing a wide range of skills to the group and learning new ones as we go along. Our group is part of a wider network of Community Archaeology groups in the area, giving the opportunity to share information and expertise.

We are still at the stage of laying down the ground work of our four year study, the outcome of which will form a record of the history, archaeology and heritage of the civil parish of Scriven, including Jacob Smith Park.

We are progressing the study through working groups linking into each other and into our Information Technology system, forming a sound basis for further study.

In this issue of the Newsletter we would like to introduce you to the work of these groups.

Landscape Archaeology is at the heart of the study. Members of the group are involved in surveying and recording the archaeological features of the landscape in the study area. This is detailed and painstaking work carried out in all weathers. It will also incorporate a **Tree and Hedge** survey and benefit from input from a professional geologist.

Archive Retrieval forms a big commitment for the group. The work involves detailed planning and coordination of visits to libraries and record offices in North and West Yorkshire and beyond. Members are also carrying out a search of literary sources. These activities require a wide range of skills, including the ability to interpret documents and maps



Jacob Smith Park at Scriven

History and Heritage in the
Harrogate District

produced long ago. Members have shown enthusiasm for the work in a willingness to travel far from our base in Knaresborough and to spend time beyond the weekly commitment.

Social History, including **oral history**, supports and informs our study of the landscape. We have completed the transfer of census returns to our computer system and are now seeking contributions to oral history from anyone who has a knowledge of Scriven in the past. We are interested in hearing about personal memories, photographs and artifacts. We already have some tantalizing glimpses from the past.

We have an enthusiastic group involved with the assessment and recording of **Finds or Artifacts** from the area. They are making headway in setting up a basis forming a picture of past life in the area. We have had excellent professional input into this group. We are planning an event in the summer to involve the public in this work.

A sophisticated **Information Technology System** developed by our members, supports all our work and is constantly being updated. All our volunteers are given an excellent opportunity to learn the basics of IT. We welcome beginners in this field. Our new website is now online. Details at the foot of this page.

Sharing our Work with the Public is an important commitment for the group. We have a selection of walks, exhibitions and talks on our work, which can be arranged for local groups. Recent contributions from our chairman, David Hunt, have included talks on our past work in the Washburn Valley, given to the Dales Centre of the National Trust and Fewston Heritage Project. David's next talk will be at Harrogate Archaeological Society AGM on Saturday April 18th at 2.30pm at the Friends Meeting Hall Queen Parade Harrogate. The subject will be 'A perambulation of the boundaries of the Forest of Knaresborough'. We give advance notice of our participation in a Medieval Day to be held in Knaresborough Castle Yard on June 21st.

Have You Got Anything to Share with us? Do you have memories from the past, documents, photographs or artifacts? If you would like to help us with this aspect of our work, get in touch with us through our new website as set out at the foot of this Newsletter or on Thursdays only by ringing **Claro Community Archaeology Group on 01423 869274** (courtesy of Knaresborough Courthouse Museum).

Late News. The group has just hosted an information day for seventy students of archaeology from the University of York, in conjunction with Harrogate Borough Council.



