

# Worcestershire Archaeology

No. 29: September 2012: ISSN 1468-1862

## Worcestershire's Past... Be a Part of it!



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## TURN MILL, OMBERSLEY PARK

With kind permission of Lord Sandys of Ombersley Court, the Worcestershire Young Archaeologists' Club (WYAC) and North Worcestershire Archaeology Group (NWAG) got together to excavate a site near Turn Mill in Ombersley Park.

NWAG are currently exploring several mill sites in their area and they invited the members of WYAC to join them at Turn Mill. Located on a raised level surface and overgrown with grass and weeds this site was perfect for training. NWAG members were great



at explaining the excavation processes and skills to our young archaeologists. The excavation took place on a hot day in May and the youngsters did extremely well to cope with not only the heat, but a nest of red ants, huge scary woodlice and persistently annoying wasps, but such are the hazards of archaeology and our young archaeologists are fortunately very stoic!

We discovered an L-shaped series of outbuildings and yards, parts of which corresponded with an old map and plan. These outbuildings were next to the mill house (long demolished) where the iron master lived.

The walls of the largest building contained re-used sandstone blocks, some of which were dressed, perhaps taken from an earlier building. Three of the stones had grooves cutting through them and oily stains, which might suggest that some machinery had been installed inside which caused this wear on the stones.

A later red brick building had been constructed over the stone and at some stage a concrete floor had been laid on top of the first brick and tile floor surface. WYAC members were able to excavate the building foundations and uncover a series of associated steps and floor surfaces.

The finds consisted of mostly brick and tile (building demolition rubble) but there were several strange shaped metal finds, which probably belonged to old machinery and window fittings, and a few pieces of 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery.

The young people and their families had an excellent excavation experience and really enjoyed the rare opportunity to dig on a real site.

*Deborah Overton  
July 2012*



• *Young Archaeologists hard at work and the grooved stones discovered on the site* •



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## Archaeology Dayschool

Worcestershire Archaeology Dayschool will be on Saturday 17th November, at the University of Worcester.

As usual there will be a varied programme of presentations on the latest archaeological discoveries and research from across Worcestershire. This year's highlights will include reports on prehistoric and later environmental archaeology from the 'Worcester Arena' site, detailed building recording and investigation at Horsham Court (Martley), new evidence for the

manufacture of medieval floor tiles in Worcester, and a final report and overview of the successful 'Grow With Wyre' landscape project in the Wyre Forest.

The Hive Admin Team will be taking bookings for the Dayschool - please contact:  
hiveadminteam@worcestershire.gov.uk  
tel: 01905 765576

## Explore the Past at The Hive!

Following a short closed period whilst we moved from our previous locations, the Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service is now open for business at The Hive! The staff and resources from Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and the Worcestershire Record Office have combined to make one large service.

One of the benefits of this larger service at The Hive is the range of resources that are now available for researchers to use, including:

- Local studies and archaeology library, including journals, trade and clerical directories
- Photographs including Worcestershire Photographic Survey and an Aerial photographic collection, most of which are now available digitally
- Maps and plans, including historic Ordnance Survey, tithe and inclosure plans (including some digital, searchable versions) and estate plans. Many of these are available not only in original copies but in a variety of digital formats for map comparison purposes
- The Historic Environment Record; a searchable database with digital mapping of all known archaeological sites, historic buildings and landscapes in the county supported by paper and digital sources
- Records of local families, groups, societies and businesses, including the archive of the Earls of Coventry of Croome
- Quarter Sessions and County and District Council records including The Worcester City Archive
- Sources for researching life stories and social history, for example Census returns, International Genealogical Index, General Register Office Index of Births, Marriages and Deaths, Local newspapers, Wills and other probate records
- Records of the Diocese of Worcester as well as Church of England parishes and Non-conformist records

For more information please see our website at [www.Worcestershire.gov.uk/waas](http://www.Worcestershire.gov.uk/waas) and The Hive website at [www.thehiveworcerster.org.uk](http://www.thehiveworcerster.org.uk).



• *We look forward to welcoming you to The Hive!* •



## Community Archaeology in The Hanleys

From September 24th - October 6th there is to be an archaeological dig near to the village of Hanley Castle, Worcestershire, on a known archaeological site. It is thought that Roman remains could be found there. Anyone can apply to join in the excavations, digging or finds processing – or both! The dig will be led by Worcestershire Archaeology for The Hanleys' Village Society. Training and equipment will be provided – no prior experience will be needed.

Expressions of interest to participate are being sought based on being able to attend for several days over the dig period. If you are interested please contact Malcolm Fare on 01684 311197 or [malcolm.fare@crossword.demon.co.uk](mailto:malcolm.fare@crossword.demon.co.uk).

## The Desert's Muddy Past

Recently Nick Daffern, one of the Worcs Archaeology environmental team, visited Qatar as part of the Qatar National Historic Environment Record which is a joint project between the Qatar Museums Authority and the University of Birmingham.



Nick says, I was undertaking environmental archaeology and auger surveys at a site called Wadi Debayan to understand the past landscape and the impact that climate and sea level changes had upon the prehistoric inhabitants. Two rubbish heaps (middens) were found several hundred metres apart. The first was radiocarbon dated to 5,200 years ago and was abandoned abruptly around 4,500 years ago due to a tsunami or similar sudden event which buried the midden with marine sediment.

We are waiting for the date of the second midden at

the moment but it is thought to be earlier. The first midden contained a lot of bone, mainly fish bone but there were also animal bone and shells, whereas the second midden was predominantly shells. The difference between the middens' contents will be due to the different

environments being exploited by the inhabitants. Dr Emma Tetlow identified the shells from the first midden as being from a sandy and rocky shoreline whilst the shells of the second midden were from a muddy mangrove environment.

It was quite a surprise to find wet peat and organic sediments around 2–3 metres below the ground when I was stood in the middle of a desert!

Thanks to Richard Cuttler and Emma Tetlow for the information and the opportunity to be part of the team.

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### **Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service is the main contact point for all information about archaeology in the county.**

For information on projects mentioned in the newsletter, or to become a volunteer in our activities for all ages and abilities, please contact us - we will send details, or put you in touch with staff who can help.

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To receive your newsletter by email as a PDF file, please send an email to our address below with the subject 'NEWSLETTER PLEASE'.

Cover photos: Main photo - Young Archaeologists at Turn Mill, Ombersley; bottom left to right - Day school 2011; a vintage view of Hanley Castle; Reconstructing the Roman oven found on the site of the Hive.

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### **For further information contact our General Enquiries:**

#### **By telephone:**

01905 765560

#### **By post:**

Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service  
The Hive, Sawmill Walk, The Butts  
Worcester, WR1 3PB

#### **By email**

archaeology@worcestershire.gov.uk



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