



Holcombe Moor Heritage Group

Newsletter

Winter 2020

Dig 2020

Our 2020 season on Cinder Hill Field will hopefully begin in March, subject to the dates being confirmed by the MOD. Our dig director, Neil Coldrick is planning four trenches initially, with the main focus being the excavation of the second bloomery furnace, the edge of which was uncovered on the last day of excavations in 2019. As soon as the dates are confirmed they will be posted on the HMHG website and on social media. We look forward to welcoming our returning team and hopefully some new diggers this year!



Members Meal

Our annual pre-dig members meal will be held on Friday 6th March at the Al Bosco restaurant, Robin Road, Summerseat, BL9 5QP at 7.00 for 7.30 pm. Places for this event must be booked and members will have to pay for their own food and drinks. The event is a good chance to catch up with the latest HMHG news, find out about the plans for the 2020 dig season on Cinder Hill Field and enjoy a delicious meal, with good company. For further details please email rikbragg@gmail.com.

We are now on social media. Keep up to date with the latest news on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



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Talk Report



On Wednesday 29th January, Professors Richard Horrocks and Bob Snape, from the University of Bolton, presented a very interesting talk entitled "Creation of an Archive for the Lancashire Cotton Industry." Firstly Richard talked briefly about the University of Bolton, explaining that it is the oldest institution in the country to teach about textiles, from 1825 until the present day. The town of Bolton is at the centre of significant inventions that drove the cotton industry. Recently, a large collection of materials related to the cotton industry in Lancashire has been purchased by the University from a collector. The University of Bolton has secured funding to create an archive containing the collection, which will be available digitally to the public as a research tool.

Secondly, Bob Snape discussed a project that was undertaken in Bolton in 1937, called Work Town, which was a study of working class life in Bolton. The study was carried out by the Mass Observation Movement founded by Tom Harrison and Charles Madge. The aim of the Movement was to study people in everyday situations by watching them and listening to their conversations. There were trained and untrained observers, who observed the people of Bolton, as they went about their daily lives. Harrison would read the local newspaper, to find out what was happening in the town, then send observers to the various events. The project covered religion, leisure, work, domestic budgets and holidays. Photographs were taken as a further method of documenting everyday life, by Humphrey Spender, many of which are now collected at Bolton Museum. The records from the Work Town project are now a unique historical archive, consisting of 65 boxes of written documentation in the Mass Observation Archive stored in Sussex. The Work Town project showed that the working class people of Bolton in 1937 worked together to support each other and were not passive, but had emotional responses to experiences and life.

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HMHG on tour!

Our dig director, Neil Coldrick has spent the winter months presenting talks about our dig on the medieval iron smelting site at Cinder Hill Field. He has visited Littleborough Archaeological Society, Wigan Archaeological Society, Friends of Castleshaw Roman Forts in Uppermill and South Pennine Archaeology Group in Rawtenstall. There are still further talks coming up, including the Regional Heritage Centre Annual Conference at Lancaster University on 7th March, Lancashire Archaeological Society at Preston on 20th March, Bolton Archaeology and Egyptology Society on 21st April and the Lancashire History Federation Annual Conference at Lancaster on 13th June. The work of HMHG is becoming more widely known throughout the North West.



Upcoming Events

Artefacts Sorting Workshop

Members are invited to a drop-in, hands on workshop sorting the artefacts and finds from our five year dig at Cinder Hill Engine House in the Holcombe Valley.
1.30-4.30 at Greenmount Cricket Club on Wednesday 26th February.
Free admission.

“Archaeological Investigations on Calf Hill”

A talk by Catherine Rousseau-Jones of South Pennine Archaeology Group.
Wednesday 26th February 2020 7.30pm at Greenmount Cricket Club, Admission £3 includes refreshments. Bar available and there will be a raffle. HMHG publications will be on sale.

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Can you put in a shift at our Cinder Hill Field Site?

Last year we asked if you could put in a shift for us because we knew we had found something particularly interesting, which made our site really special and we needed you help to shift some turf.

Your response to our call to arms was phenomenal. It however has presented us with a problem.

Our finds made the site as rare as hens' teeth. The help you provided us with led to discovering a primary smithing hearth, and at the back end of the dig season, another bloomin' bloomery!

Our site is so rare we don't actually know how rare it is!

Of course this means we need a bit more help this year, so we were wondering if you, whether you've dug with us before or are a newbie could put in another shift. **Please.**

We provided chocolate biscuits last year to keep energy levels up, this year we're adding a goodly supply of wine gums.

If you think you may be in a position to flex muscles and help shift a load more turf, could you please e mail hmhg_membership@btinternet.com and we'll let know the dates as soon as they've been agreed.

Thanks.



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