

THE ARP ACTA



Aylsham Roman Project Newsletter



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Welcome to the June issue and our last before we start the busy summer period.

What a month!

We are still pinching ourselves and wondering if it is true. Tesco Bags of Help award gave us the top amount of £4000, which is going towards the Schools Week during the last week of this month, thank you for all the blue tokens. This means so much.

The Woodgate Garden Show was a resounding success, with £1000 taken on the stall and another £1500 coming from gate takings etc, making an amazing £2500. Thank you to all who came and saw us,



chatted and signed up to be a Friend and dig in August, and anyone who bought anything or took part in the tombola.

We have also been lucky in being awarded a grant from the Mick Aston Archaeological Fund which is supported by



the Council for British Archaeology and Historic England. This has enabled us to

to buy our own video equipment. Last year we were loaned cameras through the BBC Voices project and realised how much benefit it was being able to record live footage. We now have a learning process!



Many thanks to everyone at WEX in Norwich who helped us with purchasing and gave us a good discount too.



We like using local companies and now is a good time to thank Jon at ecolourprint



in Norwich for help with our posters, post cards, leaflets and banners.

We'd also like to thank Claire and everyone at Samuels of Norfolk for their help with our polo and t-shirt designs, other clothing items and bag designs. These people have made our life much easier because of their advice about our purchases.



A final thank you must go to Lloyd Cole who came with his digger and



prepared the ground for our Schools' Archaeology, all free of charge.

Tile update from Julie Curl

Work is ongoing with the paw prints on the Roman tiles. Currently around 20 species have been identified, including Otter, European Wildcat, Stoat, Weasel, Pine Marten, Fox, Newt, deer, birds, frog, rodents and, most recently a Badger. Several types of dog have also been identified. What is striking with the ARP assemblage is that there are so many wild species, apart from dogs. I have had the chance to look at tiles from a couple of other sites, including a large town, which are more established urban areas. What is notable with these is the lack of wild species, apart from the occasional rodent. Tiles from urban areas seem to have largely dogs, domestic cats (different paw marks to the wild cat), sheep/goats, pigs, even cattle and peoples foot prints. In other areas, archaeologists have even recorded foot prints of an occasional small child with no shoes on.

The marked differences in the assemblages of the ARP and known urban sites would so far suggest the tiles at Woodgate were being prepared for a new building in an area without established habitation. While there are a range of dogs paw marks, these are likely to be companions, hunting animals and guard dogs for the people working on the new villa. The lack of domestic sheep/goat, cattle and pest controllers like cats might indicate that the tile production area was not also home to passing livestock and stored grain that would need protection from a mouse-killing cat. The lack of children's prints on the tiles also suggests the human community were not established at the time of the tile production. Work continues looking at and comparing with

other sites. I have been to zoos to photograph animal tracks for comparison and I also have friends who work with wildlife in Africa and India looking for more certain large cats paw prints for comparing with the one from Woodgate. *Thank you, Julie, look forward to you being with us again in August.*

Our tile experiment!

One Tuesday morning, we quickly rolled out 4 squares of clay, placed them amongst the trees in Peter's grounds and set up a camera trap. The area was visited by Sable (of course) and a crow who ate the food put out to tempt animals in! Fox cubs came to investigate and were not too sure of what it all was. The second night they became much bolder, one tile being taken away into the nettles and another being covered in claw scratches. We'll have them on show in August. A fascinating insight into how animals learn. We must try it again.

And finally....

As this is being written, our Schools Archaeology Week is ending, a great week, more news of this to come in a special edition over the next couple of weeks.

Don't forget our **Open Air Talk**, on the Kiln Field, **Wednesday 1st August**, gates 1800, talk 1900, bring your picnic.

The Summer Dig starts **Monday 6th August**, it's never too late to become a Friend or to come and join us. Come for a day or join us for the whole three weeks. Look forward to seeing many of you and thank you for all your support through the year. Just 28 days to go.....



ARP.....Getting the community into holes



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