

The ARP ACTA



Aylsham Roman Project Newsletter



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It's April already and the weather might be blowing hot and cold, but we are on a steady course leading towards August.

More news about the August Dig

It is hard to realise that we have completed three years and BA are putting together the report for all the activity on the Kiln field and what activity it has been! All the pottery recovered from the Kiln Field has now been taken to their Bury base to be reviewed by Andy. It is a good job they have a large vehicle! (See page 2)

This year in the Kiln field there will be a smaller area than we exposed last year. We are aiming to explore the south east corner. We have had several pieces of slag and large pieces of clay lining from earlier years and hope that we might find the Roman bloomery. It certainly would not have been near the main living area, Arthur's experiments have shown us how smelly a bloomery can be!

There will, as always, be the Children's Area, continuing on from last year's grid, south of the field exit to the lake. This will be exposed during the Schools Archaeology Week in June.

On the South Side, we hope to extend our previous area to reach and explore the trackway we originally discovered in 2015/16. We have been gradually moving towards it and hopefully we will make it this year. More finds were appearing as we neared it last year.

In both of these areas, there will be plenty of sieving needed, a really rewarding activity. The area to the south seems to be where most of the habitation over the years has been and is giving us a great picture. Do think about getting involved in this, we never seem to manage to get through all the soil removed! The South Side has a charm of its own.

The Kitchen Garden, though, will be treated differently, and we are moving into a different but exciting phase of our exploration here at Woodgate Nursery where the archaeology is becoming very important. The advice from our professionals at BA, due to the enormous quantity of finds and the significance of what is being revealed, is to work slowly and methodically to avoid any damage, and to ensure the small finds, which are often so very important, are not missed. We know from the small area excavated last year that there could be something quite special here and we need to take care with all that is done. A larger area than previously will be uncovered. The digging here is quite strenuous, but rewarding. We will be able to have quite a few more working here than last year, but working together, in teams, and sharing the digging, moving of soil and sieving of which very little was done last year.

As with previous years, we aim to let everyone who wishes, be involved in digging. We are so grateful for your commitment to us. All areas are important to the bigger picture and all contribute: wherever you are, everything counts. All sites are rewarding in their own way and it is well worth visiting each of them.

There will be times when areas will not be available for digging. These cannot be predicted, they will depend on what is found and might involve an area being closed for a whole day or just for an hour. The good side of this means we will have found something worth recording! These areas may also be closed to visitors as well, so BA can concentrate and complete the recording as soon as they can and enable that area to be reopened. Any site unavailable during the day will, whenever possible, be announced on the notice board in front of the Welcome Tent and during the morning and afternoon briefing before work begins. Many of you will remember that last year we had to stop half way through a morning's session in the Kitchen Garden when a small area of flooring was revealed.

Lunch times always bring us back to the Kiln field and, in particular, to the big marque. ***Do please be very careful when looking at the finds that are being washed and laid out to dry. It is even more important than ever that we do not mix up the contexts or lose anything.*** Do ask the washing team, hopefully wearing ARP aprons this year, what has been found.

The end of day talks, enjoyed by all, will focus on one area in particular each day, rather than a long explanation of each, depending on the day's discoveries.

Southrepps Talk



Another talk, another village hall, this time for the Southrepps Society. A lovely audience enjoyed hearing about our progress so far and had a

look at our 360 world. Check out the link at the bottom of this page.

Kiln Field Pottery



Martin and Andy from Britannia Archaeology have been to see us and have taken all the boxes of pottery that we have found over the last three years on the Kiln Field, the majority of which has come from the two kilns. Andy will now be looking through it and all finds will be added to the main report being created at the moment and which will be published in a few months time.



Car Boot Sale



The end of March saw Joan and Norman setting up their tables at the Aylsham Bure Meadows car boot sale. Over £100 was raised on a beautiful sunny morning. Thank you both.

Kitchen Garden Finds

Now the weather is warming up, the Tuesday groups are starting to clean up these finds. They are very sooty and earthy so take quite a bit of brushing before using any water, wherever possible, to clean them up. A mixture of tile and pottery has so far been cleaned and over the coming weeks we hope to finish and start counting, weighing and recording.



Did you know?.....Did you know?.....Did you know?.....

Flora was the Roman goddess of growing things. She was celebrated at the end of April by lots of drinking, eating - and throwing peas and beans at each other to avoid storms and winds. This sounds a good one to resurrect....

 ARP.....Getting the community into holes 

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