

## **Prehistory Section Report 2014**

### **David Shepherd and Brian Howcroft**

We have continued to attend the open seminars at the University of Bradford covering a diverse range of archaeological subjects including Scottish flint sources, Bronze Age ceramics and Yorkshire henges. Elsewhere we heard Bob Pegg (remember Mr Fox from the early 1970s?) discussing his work on prehistoric musical instruments.

We were represented at the Pennine Prospects Annual Conference, and continue to maintain a presence at the SOURCE meetings, providing archaeological advice on sites identified for tree-planting to alleviate flooding in Calderdale. Moors For The Future initiated a consultation about their experimental molinia mowing and the possible archaeological impact.

Two talks were given, to Halifax Scientific Society and the prehistory section of Huddersfield Archaeological Society.

Our efforts to secure approval from Natural England for small-scale excavations in the Hebden Water catchment continue.

Brian has had a very successful year in the field, and he is publishing many of the results shortly in Prehistoric Yorkshire – an annual publication of the Yorkshire Archaeological Society. His brief notes are below:

1. Field walking of Ringstone Edge Moor ploughed field carried out between January and April 2014. Multiple lithic finds dating from the Early Mesolithic to the Neolithic /Early Bronze Age period recorded using hand held GPS technology. A site plan with a 10metre grid overlay recorded finds to an accuracy of 2 metres.
2. Repair work at Middle Walshaw Dean Reservoir required total drainage. Prehistoric lithics were found on an exposed level of shore line below the stone cladding. Finds date to the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods.
3. Cemetery Fields Allotment site Sowerby Bridge was investigated when a report of the finding of a flint knife was communicated to section members. Field walking of the new allotment plots located a further six lithic finds within a 40metre area. The knife and flint artefact finds were dated to the Neolithic period by the South and West Yorkshire Portable Antiquities Scheme Officer.
4. Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Barkisland had lower than usual water levels in July 2014. Field walking of an area of exposed shore line that had not previously been investigated located a prehistoric stone built cairn with an integral box cist. The cist would have probably contained cremated remains. The capstone of the box cist was missing.

A few metres from the cist an oval stone built feature with two courses of stone was located. The two features appear to be the remains of a funerary site and are datable to the Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age period.

Both funerary features were surveyed and drawn by section members in advance of the rising water.

Yorkshire Water were made aware of the funerary site that is of national importance, and they subsequently made a press release available to the Halifax Courier.

We seek to work to professional standards. All of the lithic finds have been recorded using hand-held GPS to an accuracy of 2 metres. They have all been recorded on the Historic Environment Record and Portable Antiquities Scheme databases.