

The Prehistoric Section update June 2007 *Progress in the last few months might be best described as proceeding on a broad front rather than in any particular direction. So, in no especial order:*

Discussions with Calderdale Museums Service about **the revamping of Heptonstall Museum** have continued. The professional archaeologist who originally catalogued the Darby Collection, and who now works in the US, has been contacted. He wholeheartedly endorses the proposal to move the collection back to Calderdale from storage at the Tolson Museum in Huddersfield. It is hoped that items from this assemblage, including the nationally-significant Mesolithic hand-axe, will form the core of the prehistoric display at Heptonstall.

Jeff Wilkinson has turned up a reference to a **prehistoric dug-out boat** being found when Eastwood sewage works was extended. More details are being sought. This fits with the suggestion that rivers, as well as the hilltops, may have been important lines of communication when the British Isles were covered in dense forest ten thousand years ago.

The prehistory chapter for the book on Midgley's past was successfully completed. Available from the end of June this is an excellent publication and all members should buy at least one copy.

Visits to the Peak District confirmed that the fibreglass replica of a rock art panel in Sheffield City Museum is identical to the fibreglass replica in place on **Gardom's Edge** (covering the original). However it was felt that there was something of Ilkley Moor about the panel - in that not all the carvings may actually be prehistoric. This is a slightly heretical view and interested members are urged to go and see for themselves.



The Bronze Age burial area south of Carl Wark Fort on Hathersage Moor was visited and, gratifyingly, the excavated cairns there are very similar to those we see in the South Pennines around Hebden Bridge. Interestingly the area of the prehistoric enclosure (fort) was used for military training during the Second World War and rock 'carvings' from bullets and mortar rounds were easy to see. Serbian mortars made identical scars on the Roman paving at Dubrovnik more recently.

A visit was made to **Cresswell Crag**, a little south of the Peak, to see the first Paleolithic art to be discovered in this country. The caves at Cresswell hold numerous engraved images of prey animals dating to around twelve thousand years ago, at the immediate end of the last ice age. Equally absorbing, and easier to see, was a demonstration of flint knapping. John Lord is the leading

exponent of prehistoric technology in this country, he taught Ray Mears all he knows, and is probably going to produce replica arrows for the Heptonstall Museum display.



Fieldwork in our home area has continued, with the location of more of the curious grooved carvings that were outlined in the last prehistory talk.

There are continuing discussions about these with a number of rock art specialists. The Arthur Quarmbury archive, of similar features south of Huddersfield and at Brimham Rocks, has been scanned and Arthur is to be consulted about the distribution of copies of this record.



Over the summer it is hoped that papers on rock carving in the South Pennines and on arrowheads recovered in the same area will be completed, probably for the YAS Prehistory Bulletin and the YAS Journal.

Finally the **guided walk** around prehistoric and historic features at Ridge seemed to be well received, with some members requesting a walk in the summer around Withens to see more.