



NEWSLETTER NO 3

APRIL 2012

BIG VILLAGE DIG(BVD) and BIG SCHOOL DIG(BSD) 2011
 I reported on the success of the BIG SCHOOL DIG 2011 in the last Newsletter. It remains for me to report on what the children unearthed.

	1A	1B	2A	2B	3A	3B	
Ceramic Building Material	64	51	39	49	23	28	254
Natural	18	11	11	14	10	11	75
Coal/coke	32	36	52	71	14	53	258
Slag/clinker	3	1	2	6	1	2	15
Shale	5	4	4		1	1	15
Chalk		4	4	9		1	18
Flint	7		3	5	3	4	22
Post medieval/modern pottery	17	12	7	10	5	12	63
Slipware pottery 17/18thC			1				1
Medieval green glazed pottery	2	1		1	3	5	12
Northern Gritty ware pottery Norman 11/12thC	1	4	3	4	3	1	16
Roman greyware pottery?			2			1	3
Glass	4		3	1	3	1	12

Wood			1				1
Charcoal			1		1	12	14
Bone	1				1	1	3
Clay pipe		2	3		2	3	10
Metal	screw	button	press-stud		3 see below		6
Totals	155	128	136	170	73	136	798

Iron-bar
half 2p coin
Corroded metal

A pretty impressive result, I am sure you will agree. The results appear to mirror the results we are getting in the field-walking we are doing and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the school playfield was once arable land and the 'finds' the results of night-soiling or manuring.

Two provisional dates for the Big School Dig 2012 event are towards to the end of June, when we will introduce yet more local schoolchildren to live archaeology. Once again we will dig three test pits in the school grounds but in a different area of the playing field.

We have decided not to conduct a Big Village in 2012 as we are already heavily committed on other matters. We fully intend to carry out another BVD probably before the end of the three year project.

We have again entered an event in the Council for British Archaeology Festival of British Archaeology. This year it will be a 'live' dig on a field in which Iron Age hut-circles show up in the crop-marks, over the weekend of 21st/22nd July. We have already conducted both magnetometry and resistivity geophysics over part of the site in an effort to 'fix' the known features. The results are awaited. Please get in touch if you wish to assist with the dig.

Through the winter we have created the fence around the area of field loaned to us by the Ellwood family upon which we will build the roundhouse. We have also sourced all the timber to make the doorway and ring posts and plates. We have been promised sufficient timber for the roof-beams and thatch by English Heritage and willow for the wattle and ring-beams by John Bramley. Work will start in earnest after Easter. If you would like to help, give us a shout.



Roundhouse compound

Through the winter Tony Stevens has been working away creating Jackdaw Packs which are intended to be used at the school to teach the children about the Iron Age and what it was like to live in those times. He has received help from the school and Elaine Wells.

I have made two spindle whorls, one I have cast in lead and the other turned in clay on an impromptu pottery wheel. My first attempt to fire same resulted in a very loud explosion and a pile of clay dust. I have made another and will try again-well this is experimental archaeology. I have been given two lambs fleeces some of which I have washed and carded into 'rolags' which are then used to spin the wool on the spindle whorls. Tony has turned a spindle whorl in wood. Anyone fancy having a go at spinning, carding etc?.

Our website - ndchs.org.uk . is under constant revision and updating and has received a large number of 'hits' from all over this country and beyond. Two contacts were made from Canada where two unconnected correspondents sought information concerning the ancestors who had lived in North Duffield in 18/19th C. I was able to search our records and supply them with a lot of useful information. My thanks to Brian Burgess for building and maintaining the site.

News of the milestone refurbishment is that we now have the new cast iron faceplate which has been painted up and we will shortly be uprooting the

milestone itself to re-site it on a proper foundation. There will be an unveiling ceremony in the very near future. And a mystery. When I went to clear the milestone and dig down over twelve inches to make the lifting of the stone easier, I found that someone had deliberately buried two glass bottles up against the front of the stone. One was a 'Codd' bottle from Pulleyns of Selby. Codd bottles are early fizzy drink bottles where the neck was so constructed that it trapped a glass marble and a rubber seal to stop the gas escaping. The other was a 1940's milk bottle that I remember well from my childhood. The bottle was sealed by use of a circular card insert that fitted into a groove in the neck. We will rebury them with a modern bottle when the stone is replaced.

Hiram Codd invented the bottle to which he gave his name in 1852 and they remained in use until the 1930's when wire-spring caps and screw caps became popular. They were much sought after by children who smashed off the top to release the marble as indeed, has the one that I found. Pulleyns were mineral water dealers in Selby, certainly in the 1930's.

Northern Dairies was formed in 1937 at Holme-on Spalding Moor, later to become a huge national company, Northern Foods, it was bought out in 2011.

We have gained some new members but need more and younger ones at that. Us oldies need some support so spread the word amongst your friends. Either let Tony Stevens or myself, Brian Elsey, know.

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