

# **Annual Report of Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society 2020-2021**

This Annual Report covers the Society's year of 1st April 2020 until 31st March 2021

## **Registered Charity Number**

1108962

## **Address**

c/o 4c Dunslow Court  
Eastfield  
Scarborough  
YO11 3XT

As with all aspects of life, during the period of this report the activities of the Society were severely curtailed and impacted by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Unlike many local organisations, the Society acted quickly to embrace new technology and new ways of delivering its objectives and these are referred to in this report. The Society is thankful to those members who contributed in some way, to solving the various technical or practical issues throughout this challenging year. This included the creation of the Society's own YouTube channel to host lectures and videos.

## **Administration**

The Society and its property are administered and managed in accordance with the Constitution adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 4 April 2005. The Society is administered by members of the Committee, constituted in clause 6.0 of the Constitution, and by the Trustees.

## **Trustees**

The Trustees have the ultimate responsibility for the good governance of the Society, proper financial management and to ensure the Charitable objectives are met.

For 2020-2021 the Trustees are Trevor Pearson (Chairman of the Trustees), Martin Bland, Christopher Hall, Keith Johnston, Vanessa Milner, Simon Temlett, Dan Wilson.

The Trustees held their annual meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 when they examined and agreed the draft accounts for the financial year 2019-2020 and reviewed and formally re-adopted policies on Privacy, Safeguarding, Complaints and Reserves.

## **Committee 2020-2021**

**President** Trevor Pearson

**Vice-Presidents** Christopher Hall, Keith Johnston

## **Executive Officers**

**Chair** Dan Wilson

**Vice-Chairs** Vanessa Milner, Mark Vesey

**Secretary** Keith Johnston

**Treasurer**      Martin Bland

**Committee**

Gareth Davies

Stephen Gandolfi - resigned in November 2020

Stewart MacDonald

Sue Ogilvy- resigned in May 2020

Alison Spencer

Emma Temlett

Simon Temlett

Mike Widdas

Marie Woods

The Committee appointed members to the following posts:

**Editor of Transactions**    Keith Johnston

**Fieldwork**                      Christopher Hall / Marie Woods

**Membership**                  Sue Ogilvy resigned in May 2020, the duties were taken on by Trevor Pearson and Martin Bland

**Minutes**                         Emma Temlett

**Programme**                     Trevor Pearson

**Publications**                 Emma Temlett

**Publicity**                        Mark Vesey

**Social Media**                 Gareth Davies

**Web master**                  Simon Temlett

The Committee met virtually on 10 occasions during the year

**Objectives**

The Society's objectives are set out in clause 3.1 of the Constitution and are: To advance the education for the public benefit in the archaeological and local history of Scarborough and the surrounding area by the following:

- a. To increase and disseminate knowledge of and interest in the same.
- b. To undertake and support research into sites and archives of archaeological, architectural and historical interest, and the publication of the results of such researches.
- c. To encourage the identification, protection and preservation of such sites and archives.  
How we carried out our objectives.

## a. Dissemination of knowledge

### i) Lectures

Due to the pandemic the lectures scheduled to be held on 16 March and 20 April 2020 were cancelled. A small group of committee members worked to set up a method of delivering a lecture programme online. The format decided upon was to have a Zoom meeting just between a host from the Society and the speaker. The speaker would deliver the presentation using Zoom, but the meeting would be transmitted as a live stream via YouTube. This format made the meetings more accessible as viewers required no knowledge of Zoom and the distributed YouTube link could be used on a wide range of devices. The same link could be used to replay the talk immediately after the event and those not able to attend 'live' could easily access the talk. The lectures were also made available to the wider public for a limited time. Six lectures were delivered in the Autumn. The feedback received was unanimously positive. Members who perhaps struggled to attend lectures or chose not to attend (perhaps due to inclement weather) have been able to view them.

In view of this success a further seven lectures were delivered over the period January to March 2021 including a Members' evening and the launch of a second video – see below.

### ii) Field excursions and other activities

Normally, during the summer, the Society would organize guided walks and participate in Heritage Open Days around local historic sites such as Ayton Castle. As this was not possible this year a small team got together in June and produced a video guide to Ayton Castle which was disseminated on the Society's You Tube channel. This has been very successful with over 2000 views. A video made in 1997 of the Springfield Excavation was also re-issued on You Tube

The same team came together to make a second video covering the west mines area of the Rosedale mining complex as a contribution the National Park's Land of iron Project – this was released in March 2021. Further video tours are planned.

### iii) Publications

The Society's publications continue to be available for sale through Amazon and provides several sales from across the country. Local shops are also supplied regularly with publications. The Maritime Heritage Centre is a valuable source of revenue for the sale of publications and the Society is grateful for their ongoing support.

During the year *Rosedale Mines and Railway*, which had been continuously in print since 1974, went out of print and it is not intended to re-print it. Volume 45 of *Transactions* was published at the end of the summer initially in an electronic PDF format which made it easy to send it to members via the mailing list. It is intended to have the volume printed when this is possible. In addition, the guidance notes for contributors to *Transactions* have been revised and simplified in the hope that this will make things easier for authors.

Finally, the Society is working towards the publication of a book on Scarborough and the Second World War written by one of the committee members.

### iv) Web site and social media

The Society's Facebook page has 1,829 'likes' and 1,922 followers, this is an increase from last year 1,141 'likes', 1,142 followers. The Society's YouTube channel has 166 subscribers, the Ayton Castle video has had over 2,100 views and the online lectures given by Martin Bland, Chris Hall and Paula Ware as part of the Autumn programme each have had over 1,000 views apiece.

The main updates to the site are provided by the fieldwork team and to provide details on the Lecture Programme. Visitors to the website can make enquiries to the Society for help or information and such requests have been received from all around the world. Enquiries are circulated first to the Committee and then if required to the wider Society membership via the mailing list. Every mailing sent by the Society contains an option to unsubscribe from the mailing list for either events or information in accordance with current GDPR legislation.

The page promotes the Society's activities and advertises the Lecture Programme but also shares other news stories with an historical or archaeological aspect. The previously produced Society leaflet is still available at Society events and is used to promote the Society and information on the history of Scarborough. The 2020 AGM was held virtually so no speakers or members were present. The Society has also featured in several local newspapers in articles publicising the lecture programme and events.

## **b. Research**

### **i) Archaeological fieldwork**

An extensive programme of excavations and field survey had been planned but this had to be cancelled in its entirety due to the pandemic i.e.: -

Goathland Incline Top excavation which had been due to take place over the period 28<sup>th</sup> March to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2020. It is unlikely this project will go ahead at all.

Raincliffe possible bloomery site planned for the long weekend of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2020. As this was a 4-day excavation it can be programmed back in when restrictions relax

Scarborough Big Dig in association with the Big Ideas by the Sea event was due to take place Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 including a lecture by Carenza Lewis on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> was cancelled along with the main event.

Both have been re-scheduled for Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July to Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021. A groundbreaking online event, BIG DIG-ital, was substituted -see below:

Levisham Estate Ness Head walkover survey - in association with the North York Moors National Park, May 2020, was postponed due to the first lockdown and re-scheduled for January 2021 but that was subsequently cancelled. This will be programmed back in at an appropriate date.

Brompton Castle Hill. A further season was planned for 5th-13th September 2020 subject to consents being obtained was cancelled and tentatively re-planned for Easter 2021. It is now hoped to go ahead in early Autumn 2021.

During the summer the excavation team took the opportunity offered by good weather and the offer of one of the Field Officers' garden to catch up with finds processing from excavations conducted the

previous year. After half a dozen sessions of socially distanced finds washing and cataloguing the backlog was eliminated freeing the team to resume excavating when circumstances permit.

#### BIG DIG-ital

The team behind the Big Dig – The Society, Big Ideas By The Sea and, Heritage Adventures were very keen that some form of community archaeological project should take place despite the cancellation of actual excavations. The Big Dig-ital was an online, collaborative and community-focused exploration of archaeological material from Scarborough which took place between Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 8 and Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May, culminating in a one-hour live streamed Zoom Webinar on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>.

People living in Scarborough were asked to go into their backyards and gardens and search for surface objects, wash them and photograph them, and email the photos in to the Big Dig-ital. In total 111 photographs of 59 objects were submitted by 13 residents. All object photographs researched, identified, sorted and recorded by the team. The culmination of the Big Dig-ital took place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May between 2pm to 3pm in the form of a one hour live-streamed webinar when a selection of 10 objects were discussed by a team of 15 volunteers drawn from the Field Team. Over 50 people joined the webinar from the UK, Spain and Italy to watch and listen to the team discuss the 10 objects. The Big Dig-ital was a first for Scarborough and possibly the country.

#### ii) Historical research

Although the pandemic has meant that the proposed working groups on Scarborough's pubs and on the history of the harbour have not been able to meet yet, preparatory work has continued so that the groups can be set up and start operating as soon as it is safe to do so.

Work on the bombardment project has focused on the digitisation of the interviews conducted in the 1970s with those who witnessed the events of December 1914. The digitised files are now in the possession of the society. Discussions are taking place as to how best to proceed with this particular project.

The Society has been involved for quite a few years in the Redress of the Past project on modern British historical projects. In August 2020 the project's academic book was published – *Restaging the Past: Historical Pageants, Culture and Society in Modern Britain* – in which the society's contribution to the project is acknowledged. The society's secretary, who has contributed a chapter to the volume, was invited to represent the society and to speak at the launch event scheduled to take place last summer in London. Unfortunately, the pandemic has led to the postponement of this day of pageant-related activities.

In March 2021 the Society was contacted regarding a recent discovery of several World War 2 era artefacts that were found when a local contractor was renovating the Esplanade Hotel on the South Cliff. Marie Woods, one of the Society's Field Officers, investigated the finds and agreed to research the artefacts where possible. A Facebook post regarding the finds reached approximately 35,000 people with a second post that included a transcript of the letters found being viewed by a further 8,500 people

These finds were of great interest to the press and various local, national and international newspapers published the story. Marie Woods was interviewed for BBC Look North.

## **Outreach**

Due to the pandemic, outreach activities were restricted. The public engagement through BIG DIG-ital has been reported on above. The Society continued to receive a number of requests for information on archaeological and historical matters through enquiries@sahs.org.uk to which members of the committee responded.

In October 2020 Trevor Pearson and John Oxley gave presentations to the CBA-Yorkshire *Autumn Showcase* on aspects of the Society's work

## **C SITES AND ARCHIVES**

In November 2020 the Society commented upon the archaeological implications of the planning application for the demolition and redevelopment of the site now known as the Old Argos Building and in December on the demolition of part of St Helen's Square.

The Society has continued to work closely with the Scarborough Library Archives Group, continuing to catalogue its collection of local history resources.

## **Partnership working**

Working in partnership with other organisations and community groups is important in the delivery of the Society's Objectives. During the year the Society worked in partnership with:

Beyond Housing – Big Dig

Big Ideas by the Sea – Big Dig

British Association for Local History – publicising Society work and events

Castle Ward Tenants and Residents Association – Big Dig

Friends of Ayton Castle – represented on the Committee, video filming

Heritage Adventures – Big Dig

North York Moors National Park – Land of Iron project and Ness Head survey

North Yorkshire County Library and the Friends of Scarborough Library – Archives Group

Raincliffe Woods Community Enterprise – ongoing project work

Redress of the Past project – modern British historical projects

Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre – publications

The Society is represented on the local Heritage Forum (Chris Hall, Keith Johnston and Marie Woods); on the Yorkshire Archaeological and Historical Society (Keith Johnston); on the North Yorkshire Moors Archaeology Group (Chris Hall and Marie Woods) and the North Yorkshire Moors Land of Iron Partnership Group (Chris Hall).

**Membership**

Due to the pandemic limiting the Society's activities, it was decided to waive the Membership fee for the financial year commencing September 2020 and extend all existing memberships by a year. Nevertheless, a few people decided to pay a subscription and become members

**Signed:**

Trevor Pearson

President of the Society

Chairman of the Trustees

Dan Wilson

Chairman of the Society

**Annex 1 – 2020-2021 Programme**  
**Lectures delivered on line**

- 5 October 2020      *The forge in Forge Valley: ongoing research*, Martin Bland
- 19 October 2020      *'the said house of William Pawlen new made' - medieval domestic architecture in Scarborough*, Chris Hall
- 2 November 2020      *The Pocklington Chariot Burials*, Paula Ware
- 16 November 2020      *Medieval Brompton: The Society's excavations on Castle Hill*, Trevor Pearson
- 30 November 2020      *Extending Histories: From medieval mottes to prehistoric round mounds*, Elaine Jamieson
- 14 December 2020      *The Varied History of Scarborough Racecourse*, Keith Johnston
- 4 January 2021      *Painting with Light: Stained glass in England from the 7th century to the 21st century, an overview*, John Oxley
- 18 January 2021      *'The Wolds is our oyster' - a journey of archaeological discovery with FFWAP*, Alison Spencer
- 1 February 2021      Members' Evening - Four short presentations
- 15 February 2021      *The Hull Maritime Centre and the project to bring back the steam trawler Viola from South Georgia*. Dr Robb Robinson
- 1 March 2021      *Who knows where the time goes? A Career in Ruins*, John Oxley FSA talks with Marie Woods
- 15 March 2021      *Launch of the Society's film on Rosedale Mines and Railway*
- 29 March 2021      *The genius of Eugenius*, Kathryn Ferry
- 12 April 2021      *Restoring a community-the Rillington One Place study*, Pam Smith