

On the Ranch

We are finally reaching completion of the Tithe Mead excavation for this season. Now we've had our visit from MAYA we are removing the last section of Midden material, which appears to have post/stake holes inserted into it. So this final stage is perhaps the trickiest so far, apart from the stone structure. A large amount of material has been recovered particularly pottery, all of which appears to be Roman in various forms and fabrics. We also recovered an amount of glass, both plate and vessel form fragments. A fuller report back will be made available via the newsletter when we're out of the field and into the post excavation work. This will likely start 13th September, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. An email will be sent all members with the relevant info.

A huge thank you to the Mick Astons Young Archaeologists for doing so well when they came and participated with the dig (see below). Everybody appeared to have a splendid day and we all might have learnt a thing or two. I would also like to pass on thanks to James, Margaret & Richard Yandle for all the help and support they continue to offer the group, we really couldn't do it without you. Thanks to everybody who has participated in anyway with this year's excavation. We've nearly enough information to start to build the narrative of the site and how it fitted (fits?) into the wider landscape of the levels.



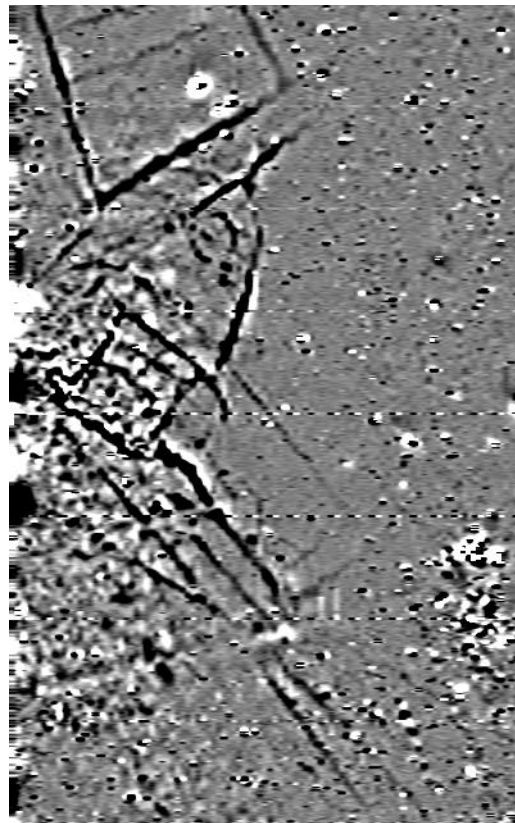
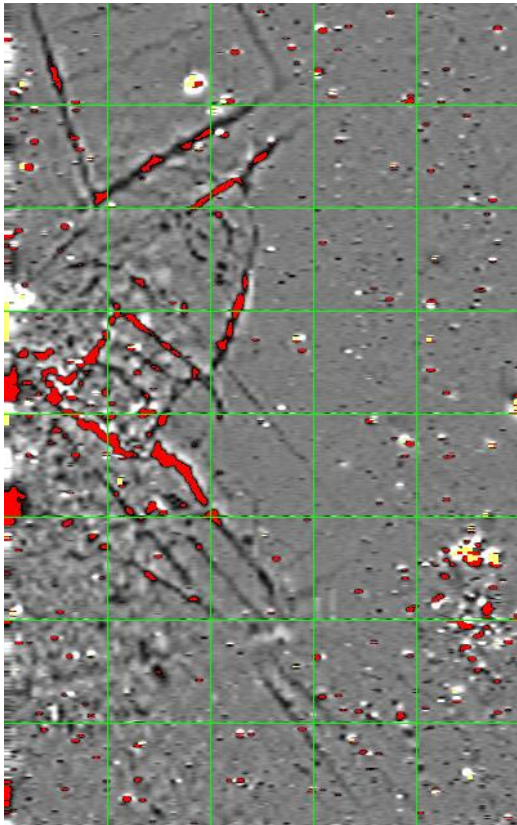
MAYA on the march



Can you dig it?!

Our autumn schedule at Tithe Mead is likely to be focussed on further geophysics of the fields adjoining the site. More details will be available at a later date via the newsletter/ email.

We've just finished the initial assessment survey at Wincanton. Thanks to Gary, Caroline, Steve and Tanya for inviting us to have a look. Well we've had a look and this is what we found so far (see below). To assess the site we've initially surveyed two hectares (of a ten hectare field) using gradiometry. We are going to survey two 'suspicious' grids using earth resistance (resi), grids second & third up from the bottom right. The grids are 20m x 20m, the red highlights readings associated with thermo-remnant materials. There are sixteen more grids surveyed the left of the image but unfortunately deadlines mean you will have to wait until next month to see what else is there. To be fair it looks as though we've more than enough to contend with.



Holbrook survey (North to top of image)

We are about to commence work at Penselwood with the local history group. Thank you to those of you who've already expressed an interest in participating. You know who y'are, expect an email soon. A lot is already known or suggested about the origin, purpose of the pits (see Somerset HER) but very little ground with the pits is suitable for surveying. We have access to some of it and we will be surveying a hectare (having previously surveyed a hectare in the field adjoining the target area), with opportunity for further investigation if necessary or as required. Again, this initially an assessment to see if anything shows beneath the surface which might help inform as to their use, provenance or history. Thanks to Geoff and Jonathon, with the history group, for their continued support (and patience) with this project and for negotiating access with the land owners.

We also intend to return to Park this autumn, but not just yet!

Finally I would like to congratulate James, Andy, Hayley and Elliott for their great success with the excavations at Lufton villa this past month. It ticked all the archaeological boxes. They overcame road closures and extended hospital visits; features not being where they were meant to be against (literally) features being where they weren't meant to be; 1960s six formers with a wicked sense of humour and that

unrelenting Somerset sun! Still a great success, particularly the open day and evening talk, both of which were attended in great numbers by local people. All of the public I spoke to had positive comments to make about it. Good work for the archaeology, which is what it's all about isn't it?!

That's it for this month, next month will be a call out for some more work on the phone box/info portal, so check your diaries.

Nigel Harvey