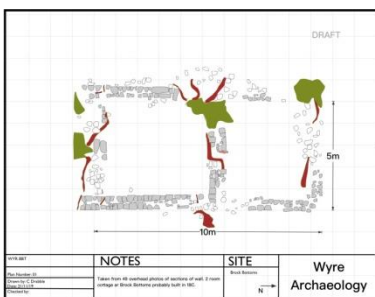


Stay in touch! If you have an interesting topic you'd like to share or a question just get in touch and we'll publish or try to answer.

Open air digging recommenced on Saturday 5 June and a small but enthusiastic team of diggers have turned out over the last couple of weekends and Wednesdays to firstly clear and then to excavate the ancient cottage by the River Brock. Dave Berry, who has dug at Bourne Hill, Hollowforth, Bilsborrow and Cabus said, 'I think this is a great site to work on'. There's still opportunity for more volunteers on this project which will probably take up most of this season at least, so if you're interested just get in touch.



This was Chris Drabble's drawing of the site when first surveyed in November 2019. We had exposed sections of walls to reveal a two-room

cottage but we couldn't locate the entrance or any connecting doorway.

By the time we wrapped up for winter, we'd revealed the remains of plaster on one of the walls and two possible doorways and we had finds ranging from picnic litter including meat or fish paste jars, bottles, a knife from Blackpool café and an 1817 silver shilling.

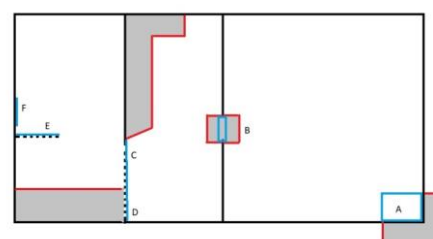
Due mainly to COVID, our winter break proved longer than expected; by December 2020, the site had already almost reverted to its original weed-covered state. Consequently, on our first visit on 28 May this year, the first job, tackled 'enthusiastically' by Dave Berry and new member, Kev, was to start pulling up the weeds.



As the excavation has progressed, over a couple of weekends and Wednesdays, the structure has begun to be revealed. Kev's photo (left) looking north shows a cobbled floor next to a plastered wall with possible internal divisions.

Dave's photo (below) appears to show foundations

underneath the NE corner.



Dave's plan shows in grey the excavated areas and the overall layout of the cottage.

Dig Hunt

We *have* been looking for other projects while the Brock dig continued. Our friendly Cabus farmer invited us back in a 2-day window between his mowing and muck-spreading to continue our investigation of the **Ribchester-Lancaster Roman road**. Simon was keen, especially since we had buried his tarpaulin over the suspected remains of the road on our previous visit last September. Unfortunately the team was already committed to Brock so we decided to postpone our return to August/September this year.

We were approached by residents of a small enclave in Samlesbury, the '**Samlesbury Horse-shoe**', a narrow peninsula formed by a sharp



meander in the River Ribble, to investigate potential ancient remains there. The area is subject to a planning application for the development of

a sand and gravel quarry similar to that at Brockholes to the west. Although the planning authority (LCC) would require an archaeological assessment before quarrying could begin, the residents wanted a preliminary 'heads-up'.

Chairman Brian and our archaeological consultant, Mike, went out to meet the residents and assess the site's potential and were not a little excited at what they observed. Possible ancient fish ponds, a landing stage, buried buildings, an ancient road and the fact that the famous Cuerdale Hoard of Viking silver was found not so far away were factors in their excitement.

A plan of action was put forward but at that point the residents hesitated, since permission would have to be obtained from the landowner, The Booths Charities Salford, whose history goes back to around 1630. Sadly it now appears that no progress will be made at least in the short term.

Another invitation came from the Headteacher of **John Cross School, Bilsborrow** to return to the site of an earlier excavation of the school field where we failed to prove the existence of the Ribchester to Catterall Roman road. United Utilities had been given access to the neighbouring

field for a new flood alleviation installation and the Headteacher (a WA member) thought that we might be able to excavate in that field for another shot at proving the route. He put us in touch with the Trustees of the school who manage the land and Brian, David Ratledge and myself met with their representatives to have a look.

The Trustees were very supportive, but an examination of the site was disappointing. Not only was the likely track of the road uncertain but the concrete-hard clay soil was impervious to David's usually effective steel probe. However, it's hoped that another planned development may allow us a small excavation in the future.

I mentioned in a previous issue a possible project to investigate the **Georgian quay at Wardleys Creek** near Hambleton. According to Wikipedia the creek was used by the Romans and, in more recent years, emigrants bound for the Americas set sail from it. Committee members, Peter Scott and Chris Clayton have undertaken some reconnaissance which we hope to report on in the future.

We still have a possible project with the **Friends of Tulketh Hall**, to explore possible archaeology dating as far back as Roman times on the site of the former **Tulketh Hall in Preston**. Once on the banks of the Ribble and now a community centre and car park due for redevelopment, it has possibly been the site of a Roman watchtower, a mediaeval abbey and a royal castle. We're waiting to see if this project goes ahead.

Finally, one of our new members, Helen, has raised the question of the possible existence of a **deserted mediaeval village close to Bartle**. Rumours have been around for a while so we think it's worth investigating. If anyone has information that might help, please get in touch.

We're always interested to hear of possible projects, just let us know.

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If you have any interesting photos or recollections of sites you've visited, please email them to [secwya@gmail.com](mailto:secwya@gmail.com)

We were hoping to recommence monthly meetings from July at a new venue of The Village Centre, Great Eccleston. Not only would this have sufficient room for a good number of members but broadband would allow us to have on-line access for members unable to attend in person. Unfortunately, the extension of COVID restrictions will delay our meeting restart.

We'll let members know as soon as we're able when we can reopen the meetings. In the meantime all membership subscriptions remain at £5 per person. Thanks to all the members who have renewed and subscribed.

If you haven't already please do so as soon as possible. Thanks.

#### WEBSITES WORTH VISITING

Lancashire Archaeological Society  
Lancashire's Roman Roads (David Ratledge):  
Wigan Archaeology Society:  
University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age

<https://lancsarchaeologicalsociety.wordpress.com/>  
[www.twithr.co.uk](http://www.twithr.co.uk)  
[www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk](http://www.wiganarchsoc.co.uk)  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/lytham-st-annes>,  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/wyre-lancs>,  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/preston>



**Membership Benefits: Full Membership:** 10 meetings with voting rights, group membership of Council for British Archaeology and CBA(NW) and Lancashire Local History Federation, free training, participation in digs, basic kit loan, personal dig insurance, WA Newsletter, Wigan AS and Lancashire Local History Federation newsletters, Lancaster Uni's Centre for Regional Studies circulars. (*£12 individuals, £18 two family members at same address, full-time students up to age 21 free*). **Associate Members:** participation in digs, basic dig training, loan of kit, dig insurance, newsletter and circulars as above (*£5*).

*All classes of paid membership in 2021 - £5 per person*

#### WYRE ARCHAEOLOGY OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

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| Chair                | Brian Rigby                            |
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| Immediate Past Chair | Chris Clayton                          |
| Treasurer            | Simon Millward-Hopkins                 |
| Secretary            | Dave Hampson                           |
| Committee Members    | Mike Edwards, Dave Berry, Peter Scott. |

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