

## Work Experience Earthwork Survey at The Slip, Northwick

In July a team of 11 young people from local schools undertook a survey of the earthworks in the field by The Slip. Many people visiting the Northwick Lido Nature Reserve or walking their dogs along the riverside footpaths will have noticed these strange lumps and bumps and perhaps even wondered what they were. The aim of the survey was to record the earthworks and then undertake documentary research to discover what the field might have been used for in the past. The team produced an off-set tape measured scale plan, took levels across the site and even sampled the soil using an auger.

The plan survey seemed to indicate a row of regular hollows with a trackway alongside. After consulting various old maps, including the one being conserved as part of the Northwick project, it was discovered that there were brickworks in the adjacent fields in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, later owned by a Mr Knapp who built Northwick House. In this field they were making bricks from the nearby clay and sand and then firing the bricks in kilns. This was a perfect site for this industry as all the materials needed were nearby and the heavy bricks could be transported by Trows (flat-bottomed boats) to other sites. The conclusion was that the earthworks represented several clay pits and extraction tracks for moving the clay to the nearby brickworks.



If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter and would like to receive regular updates on the project and subsequent newsletters, please contact:

Sheena Payne-Lunn 01905 721133 or email [Sheena.paynelunn@worcester.gov.uk](mailto:Sheena.paynelunn@worcester.gov.uk)  
Further information available on line at [www.wyac.co.uk/northwick](http://www.wyac.co.uk/northwick)

### Dates for your diary:

September 30<sup>th</sup> - Bat Walk - Limited places – further details upon booking!

October 30<sup>th</sup> - Talk – Anglo-Saxon Northwick and Worcester, John Hemingway 7.30pm

November 20<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm - Recent research at Northwick and Bevere – the results. Talks, exhibition and an opportunity to help with finds processing!

January (TBC) - Archaeology and Aerial Photography

All talks will take place at the Bishop Allenby Hall – please contact Sheena for further details!



## Have you heard about the Northwick Manor Community Heritage Project?

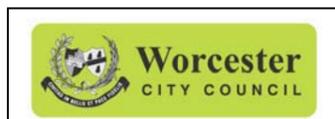
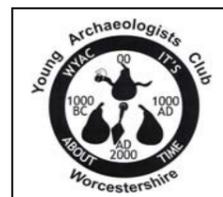
We hope you have, because we have been involving the local community through this Project for over 15 months now! - but just in case you haven't - this Heritage Lottery Funded project has been designed to engage and inspire local people of all ages, through the historic landscape, archaeology and natural environment of Northwick and Bevere. This has so far included an exciting educational programme with local schools and youth organisations. There have been three family walks, six adult talks and six workshops some of which provided the opportunity to try out researching and to learn new skills – and it is not too late to get involved! A Story So Far event took place at the school where the children displayed their work. The Project will culminate with the production of interpretation panels designed by Sara Fenn from the University of Worcester and placed along a circular heritage trail, which follows existing rights of way. Local artist Valerie Briggs has produced several beautiful wildlife paintings already and Steve Rigby has also produced two of the four historic reconstruction illustrations ready for these panel – they will look amazing!

The project is being co-ordinated by the Worcestershire Young Archaeologists' Club and supported by partner organisations Worcester City Museum Archaeology Section, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcester City Parks Department, Worcestershire Record Office, the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the University of Worcester.

### Photographic Training Session down at The Slip, Northwick

As part of the Project a workshop was provided for local people to learn how to take good photographs of wildlife. With help from Dennis Lee and Bob Tunstall from the Worcestershire Camera Club and Richard Clarke, Park Ranger for the Northwick Lido Nature Reserve a group of enthusiasts took their cameras down to the Slip to look for 'mini-beasts' and photogenic plants.

Everyone learnt something about taking a good photograph. Some excellent pictures were taken - some of which have been sent in and will go on our Website. Hopefully the session inspired people to enter their best shots into the Photographic and Art Competition being organised by the Project – see attached Flyer.





### Wren Miller – Artist in Residence

Teachers helped us to select Wren Miller to be our project Artist in Residence at Northwick Primary School. Wren is well known for her beautiful artwork and sculpture from natural materials and her ability to inspire children, and she proved to be the ideal choice.

We asked Wren to base her residency on the topics of the River Severn and brickmaking – a local industry since medieval times. She developed these themes through workshops with Key Stage 1 pupils. These involved serpentine paper trails and patterns, learning about the river and brickmaking and then getting muddy with the children puddling clay in buckets and making their own briquettes.

Wren and the children making briquettes



The children really enjoyed these sessions and produced some excellent artwork. They had great fun learning about bricks and brick-making without even realising it. The strange names and associated words they learnt became an integral part of the final piece of artwork, a lasting sculpture in the school grounds. This was created by the children stamping letters and designs, even their footprints, onto the larger bricks which were sent to be fired at a local brickworks free of charge. The fired bricks were then constructed into a sinuous sculpture snaking its way through the grass, representing the River Severn and celebrating the local brickmaking tradition. At the centre of the brick river is a birdbath designed to catch rainwater.

Pupils have also benefited from various history-themed workshops organised by the project including creating a 'mini museum' with staff of Worcester City Museums and learning about moats with local archaeologists.



Children help Wren to put in bricks recorded by a newspaper photographer.



### Focus on Finds: Glass Bottles

This lovely selection of mid to late 19<sup>th</sup>-century bottles was found in a garden off the Northwick Road. It is often possible to date old bottles due to the many changes as technology improved from handmade blown to mass production.



The two largest bottles are embossed flat-bottomed Hamiltons one a screw cap made after 1872, the other with a 'blob-top' and probably a bit earlier in date. They could have been used for beer or sparkling water.

The other two smaller bottles were most likely from the same period but were used for sauces or for something like a hair tonic and might have had glass stoppers or corks.

The smallest hexagonal bottle is an ink bottle with a sheared top and would have had a cork.

### The History of Glass and Bottles

The Egyptians were making glass objects over 5000 years ago and they even knew how to make different colours. It was the Romans who imported glass to Britain 2000 years ago. But it was not until the 16<sup>th</sup> century that any quantity of glass was made in Britain. Wood-fired furnaces meant glassworks had to be located near forests, but in the 17<sup>th</sup> century the use of coal in the furnaces meant glassworks were built near most big towns (including one in the vicinity of Park View Terrace). Up until that time most drinks, medicines, and foodstuff were sold in ceramic bottles and jars, but as demand increased for glass containers, production grew, and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was mass produced and therefore fairly cheap to make.

Glass is made from sand, potash and lime mixed together. It was heated until molten in a clay crucible set in a wood-fired furnace. The oldest bottles were blown using an iron blow-pipe. When cooled the bottle neck was snapped off leaving a sheared top. The first bottles were long thin vials of green or blue glass and used for medicines. They were stoppered with oiled hemp (rope fibre) or later with a piece of cork or glass stopper. By the 17<sup>th</sup> century bottles were blown into wooden or iron moulds, which made them a uniform shape. Lips of bottle tops were rolled or had a blob of glass added onto the top.

Wine was the first drink to be put into glass, followed shortly by beer. Originally they started in green round bulbous short-necked bottles but changing over time into the tall cylindrical wine bottle shape or modern brown beer bottle we recognise today. Blue glass was more unusual and mainly used for wine and oils. Most bottles were pale green but glass was made in all colours – by simply adding iron or copper oxide to produce all shades of green and blue. Ruby glass was very expensive as it was made by the addition of real gold! Moulded bottles could be embossed with designs, names and adverts, but making airtight bottles was always a problem. To stop corks leaking they had to be kept moist. So William Hamilton made pointed-bottomed bottles, which had to be laid on their sides. Keeping fizzy drinks in bottles was difficult so corks were wired on. Later the screw cap and the crown cap was invented. Improvement in stoppers enabled Hamilton bottles to eventually have flat bottoms. In 1875 Hiram Codd invented the famous bottle sealed inside with a marble – boys liked to smash these to get the marble out!

### Building Recording Training Work Shop at Bevere Manor

With kind permission from the owners of Bevere Manor, a small team of project researchers undertook a building survey, supervised by specialist Martin Cook. By the end of the day the team had managed to record the interior courtyard and back of the house and produce a photographic survey. There followed an indoor session where the team learnt how to use computer software to stitch together the survey plans and photographs.



## WHAT HAS HAPPENED SO FAR



### Northwick to Bevere Walk

A group of local people, including four dogs and a baby joined a lovely sunny 3 mile walk from Northwick to Bevere in July, led by Deborah Overton co-leader of the project.

### Garden Excavations

Archaeologists, Emma Hancox and Nick Daffern, from Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service and Phredd Groves from University of Bristol, supervised excavations with Young Archaeologists in three Northwick gardens. Sheena Payne-Lunn project co-ordinator explained the reason for digging in these gardens. "We have been trying to locate the medieval bishops' palace which we know was somewhere in the area by The Green. We had a great day, and although we found no medieval pottery, we did find a flint awl tool from the Neolithic which was at least 3000 years old".

Many thanks to the residents who let us loose on their gardens!



The Haywood Family watch their pond being dug up by Emma and two Young Archaeologists.

Nick gets digging and Mr Baylis shows us an old brick probably made out in the local fields.



Phredd and two Young Archaeologists prepare to dig up Mr and Mrs Ruff's flower bed.