

Bradford u3a Archaeology & Geology Group



Archaeological Resources for West Yorkshire

v.2.0 [Derek Barker 30.09.21]

These notes are intended for existing and new Bradford u3a members. As far as I know the u3a archaeology & geology group is the only archaeology 'club' meeting regularly in Bradford itself. For those people wanting additional information there are many resources to draw on: Maggie Fleming, Paul Tomany and Cathryn Iliffe have all contributed to this collection. They and several other u3a members have special interests within archaeology and would be well worth consulting in person.

Local Books & Journals

A good place to start is with *West Yorkshire: an Archaeological Survey*, Faull and Moorhouse, 1981. This four-volume work was started in 1974 when local government reforms brought the new county of West Yorkshire into being. I have all four volumes somewhere, although I can only lay hold of two at present in the chaos that is my study. The Bradford Local Studies Library will have a copy.

The Local Studies Library will also have all the editions of a journal *The Bradford Antiquary* which has been published, with gaps, since the end of the nineteenth century. I think it is fair to say that the articles appearing recently are more historically than archaeologically based, but I did get a report on 'Roman Coins in the Bradford area' accepted there, and there is plenty of industrial archaeology. The journal is published by The Bradford Historical & Antiquarian Society. Any member wanting to publish, as well as read, would find this journal a useful vehicle for their creativity.

The premier source of information about archaeology in this region is the Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society (YAHS). It is Leeds based and at present (late 2021) holds its meetings by Zoom. It issues a major peer review publication *The Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Journal*. The complete run of the journal is not available within Bradford (except perhaps the university library which is not open to us). I'm sure the Leeds Libraries will have it somewhere. But I have the last decades or so which I would be happy to loan out.

If your interest in archaeology can accommodate older work I must mention Sidney Jackson who was curator of Cartwright Hall Museum in the period 1950-75, before it became purely an Art Gallery. He issued a home-produced journal called the *Archaeology Group Bulletin*. The YAHS have all the copies on a CDROM and the Bradford Libraries have some as hard copy, as do I. They are very good

on the type of landscape features one might see on a country walk, but cannot be computer searched which is a drawback.

Archaeological Societies

The **Bradford Historical & Antiquarian Society** would be well worth joining. It meets in the Bradford Club on a Wednesday morning, just like the u3a does. The lectures are always of interest, although you have just missed me talking about post-Roman Britain! For your membership fee you get the journal as well as a free monthly lecture. Some of our group are members of both u3a and BHAS.

The Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society is the premier local group. For the purposes of meetings it splits into sections. I am a member of the Roman and the Industrial History sections. Cathryn is a member of the Prehistory section and there is also a Medieval section.

There is no other archaeological society in Bradford itself (aside from the u3a) but **The Huddersfield Archaeological Society** is a very famous one in a neighbouring town which holds excellent lectures, and undertakes field work. They would welcome new members I am sure. I was one myself for some years but I'm not keen to drive at night, especially on the motorway. More courageous group members might consider it.

Museums

Cliffe Castle Museum at Keighley has, as most members will know, a magnificent collection of rocks & minerals, and local industries from the past (like quarrying, mining and brickmaking) are very well served. Its archaeology collection is rather select but there are good collections of Neolithic axes and Roman material, together with hoards of Iron Age Gold coins and Roman denarii.

I haven't been to the **Craven Museum** at Skipton since it has been refurbished but it used to have a fine collection of archaeological objects. Paul will know more than me.

The **Leeds Museum** is a bit disappointing but is worth seeing once.

York has the **Viking Museum**, and the **Yorkshire Museum** with its Roman and Early English displays. They are essential visiting.

Historic Environment Record

The West Yorkshire HER is available in Wakefield (the county town). It contains information on all known archaeological sites and finds. The staff prefer you to visit in person, and it is most valuable if you are searching for specific information rather than browsing idly.

You can computer search a version of the HER at:

<https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/>

Archives

There is a branch of the **West Yorkshire Archives** in the Bradford Local Studies Library (visiting by appointment).

If you live near Skipton or Harrogate it is easy to slip into North Yorkshire. Consequent archive research of a similar type involves a trip to **Northallerton**.

Places to Visit

The nearest visible Roman masonry is at the Manor House site in Ilkley. The nearby parish church of All Saints has a collection of Saxon stonework.

Baildon Moor and Ilkley Moor have cup and ring marked stones.

Baildon Moor has many visible coal mining shafts and Harden Moor has much evidence of former stone quarrying, together with a Bronze Age stone circle. Andrew & Ruth are our experts on this site.

Bradford Cathedral is a converted medieval parish church and should be visited. Wakefield Cathedral and York Minster are magnificent and the important Roman centre of York (Eboracum) is essential for other reasons: it has a virtually intact Roman / Medieval wall circuit among many other historic buildings.

Skipton has an important medieval castle as well as the Craven museum.

Miscellaneous

The Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society has already been mentioned. This YAHS site gives pointers to libraries, museums and other resources:

<https://www.yas.org.uk/Sections/Industrial-History/Find-out-more-about-Yorkshires-industrial-history>

The Prehistory section of the YAHS is very active. The old copies of 'prehistoric Yorkshire' are available online, and Cathryn could loan out those from the last 6-7 years. Several useful publications are available from the distinguished prehistorian Keith Boughey.

<https://www.yas.org.uk/Sections/Pre-History/Pre-History-Publications>

Cathryn recommends the website of Blaise Vyner:

<https://teessidepsychogeography.wordpress.com/tag/blaise-vyner/>

And the site of the Upper Wharfedale Heritage Group:

<https://www.uwhg.org.uk/about-uwhg>

Paul recommends this site run by the University of York Department of Archaeology:

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>

I'm certain that this collection has some notable omissions although I hope this will give you plenty to be going on with! If I have missed out any personal favourites please let me know.