

Educational Project Update

The third and final year of the Society's Educational Project

The third and final year of Archaeology for All at Upper Row Farm was again a successful year for the Society's Heritage Lottery funded Educational Project. An update was given to members and visitors at the February AGM and three project related articles were published in *Camertonia* in April 2010.

Ceri Lambdin

On July 17th we again ran an Open Day as part of the Festival of British Archaeology. *Deva Victrix Leg XX* from Chester were booked again, following the success of 'Invasion Day' in the September of the previous year. We had a full complement of activities during the day with both a Roman and Iron Age theme.

The Roman soldiers brought along a military camp complete with accompanying women and children all in period costume. The soldiers spent the day enrolling children of all ages into the Roman army and there were some great moments with the children being drilled, put on parade in front of the Centurion *Ocratius Maximus Gittus* being taught a Roman military manoeuvre, the *testudo*, before having a mock battle against their parents. At the site of the Project's Iron Age roundhouse a Celtic re-enactor complete with hunting dog took up residence for the day, while Tavis Walker and Shaun Lambdin talked to visitors about the methods of construction and thatching of the roundhouse. Julian Back cooked pizzas in his experimental bread oven and Iron Age and Roman outfits were provided for the children to join in the activities.

Bill Adams, Owen Dicker and Les Hayes gave tours of the Blacklands site and the trenches for the Society's 2010 dig. Down at the farm, Brenda Rogers gave tours of the newly extended Roman Garden and there were numerous activities and displays of finds available in the Museum Barn. We had 336 visitors including 16 cyclists who nearly fell off their bikes when they encountered Roman soldiers marching up the hill towards Blacklands shouting their battle cry of "*Deva Vitrix*". The day was supported by 22 volunteers, and it was probably the most successful open day the Society has ever run.

A week after the open day, Tavis and a group of BACAS members were filmed at the Blacklands site by the production company Talkback Thames for a 4 minute feature in an edition of 'Escape to the Country' a BBC programme featuring ex-field archaeologist turned TV presenter Jules Hudson. Jules and the producer Titus Ogilvy were very keen for an archaeological site to feature in an episode during the Festival of British Archaeology and they were impressed with the roundhouse and the villa footprint. We all had great fun and the programme was aired on 7 March 2011 (see page 38 for photos).

On September 18th we held a second Open Day, this time with a Medieval theme to complement the first year of the Homefield Project and the successful training excavation. We booked the Knights of Longshanks a Medieval re-enactment group specialising in living history displays, both domestic and military. A large number of colourful tents populated the field as part of their encampment and there were cooking displays, an authentic blacksmith giving demonstrations and hands-on archery for adults and children. We had 168 visitors who were given tours of the excavation site by Robin Holley, the Director of the Homefield Project, Owen Dicker and Les Hayes and in total 22 volunteers helped with activities including an archaeological trail run by Tavis.

By the end of the final year, in December 2010, the Educational Project had engaged over 4650 members of the public; 64 BACAS members gave their time and effort; along with numerous non-members such as Claire Ryley and Ron Dawson. This has resulted in 815 volunteer days, giving us fund matching of £122,239.71 - almost double our target of £62,400. The final grant awarded to BACAS from the HLF was £48,665.81. A full report on the project has been distributed with this edition of *Camertonia*. The project has finished, but the educational work that BACAS does will continue on. A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed towards the success of this project! Without the support of the volunteers, the Hendy family and, of course, our fantastic Educational Officer, Tavis Walker, this project would not have been as hugely successful as it was.