



# *Bedale Archaeology & History Society*

## *Programme 2025*

7 Jan.	<i>AGM + John Gully, from prizefighter to coal-mine developer</i>	Tony Wood, historian <b>Zoom</b>
4 Feb.	<i>Roman Chester-le-Street<sup>1</sup></i>	Robert Bishop, local historian and photographer <sup>2</sup> <b>Zoom</b>
4 Mar.	<i>Ripon Military Camps in WWI</i>	Antony Prince
1 Apr.	<i>Harrogate's saviour – Edward Wilson Dixon: the story of Harrogate's water supply and the building of Roundhill Reservoir<sup>3</sup></i>	Graham Seel
6 May	<i>St Hild and the Synod of Whitby</i>	Rev. Dr Greg Hoyland FRSA FHEA <sup>4</sup>
12 June	<i>Oswald Idling of Northumbria AD604-642, King &amp; Supersaint</i>	Prof. Dr Dyno Keatinge <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday</b>
1 July	<i>Guided walk along the section of the trackbed of the Stockton &amp; Darlington Railway in Preston Park, Eaglescliffe</i>	Dr Emma Watson, Tees Archaeology

<sup>1</sup> The name *Concangis*, meaning 'Place of the horse people', is uncertain since it does not appear in Roman records but it is the name most cited today for Celtic Chester-le-Street. The Romans arrived in about 70 AD and set up armed camps. Later, turf and wood forts defended the river crossings and strong points along the roads. Chester-le-Street probably began its Roman life as a marching camp, then grew into a fortlet and then a small Roman fortress made of turf and timber, and then became a stone fort when Hadrian's Wall was built in about 122 AD. This is the only fort on this road north of York. The archaeology of Chester-le-Street is primarily centred around the Roman Concangis, a Roman cavalry base. Chester-le-Street Roman fort was initially established after 70 AD as a timber and heavy boulder clay earthwork as part of the conquest of Northern Britain by Cerialis with suppression of the Brigantes. A turf wall had a ditch in front of it, identified during excavations. After 122 AD it was replaced by a 2.52-hectare stone structure, which operated for more than 200 years until the Romans left Britain in 410 AD. The fort's intriguing later history includes the building within the enclosure of a wooden church, which eventually developed into the parish church of St Mary and St Cuthbert, now a Grade I-listed building.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://robertbishop.uk/galleries/> for some of Robert's gorgeous photos.

<sup>3</sup> At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Harrogate faced the prospect of what the local press described as a 'water famine'. Ironically, there was a real danger that the taps would run dry in this increasingly popular Spa town. However Harrogate's newly appointed Chief Water Engineer, Edward Wilson Dixon, initiated and oversaw a scheme to build a new water supply for the town: Roundhill Reservoir, near Masham.

Graham was a history teacher for 34 years. He was Head of History at The Manchester Grammar School, The Grammar School in Leeds and finally St Paul's School in London. He has published widely on a variety of topics, including a well-received book revising the traditional view of 'Bad King John' (*King John: an underrated King*, Anthem Press, 2012). He is currently working on WWI memorialisation in stained-glass windows in North Yorkshire churches.

<sup>4</sup> A welcome return visit from a popular speaker



2 Sep.	<i>Excavating Bronze Age Homes: The Must Farm Pile-dwelling Settlement<sup>5</sup></i>	Chris Wakefield, Cambridge Archaeological Unit
7 Oct.	<i>Boundary stones – discovering hidden history in the landscape<sup>6</sup></i>	Hilary Jones, The Milestone Society

<sup>5</sup> In 2015-16 a team from the Cambridge Archaeological Unit uncovered one of the best-preserved Late Bronze Age settlements ever discovered in the UK. The stilt houses above a river & surrounded by a palisade were destroyed by fire, causing the buildings & their contents to collapse into the water & to be preserved for thousands of years in silt. The astonishing artefacts discovered include textiles, weapons, tools & bowls still containing meals. This talk tells the story of this incredible site and how it has helped us to a better understanding of life almost 3,000 years ago.

<sup>6</sup> Hilary's illustrated talk will explore why boundary markers were set up and what they say about your local area. From parish boundaries to lighthouses and castles, marking the boundary was, and remains, part of our hidden history. Hilary is vice-chair of The Milestone Society, a charity that conserves our wayside heritage of milestones, boundary markers and traditional fingerpost. She worked in transport planning and highways, is now retired and lives in Wensleydale. Her talk in March 2024 on *The Richmond to Lancaster Turnpike* was very well received.





4 Nov.	<i>Seeing the Dead: New Insights into Roman Gypsum Burials in Yorkshire</i>	Maureen Carroll FSA, Professor Emerita of Roman Archaeology, University of York <b>Zoom</b>
2 Dec.	<i>Ancient DNA and kinship analysis at the Iron Age cemetery at Wetwang Slack, East Yorkshire</i>	Prof. Ian Armit, Chair in Archaeology, University of York <b>Zoom</b>

Most talks take place in Bedale Hall and on Zoom at 7.30 pm on the first Tuesday in the month. Some talks are Zoom only and June's meeting is on the second Thursday.

