

# Community Archaeology Study Days 2007/8



## Photography in Archaeology

With Eric Houlder, Archaeological and Forensic Photography

Fulford Social Hall, School Lane, Fulford, York

Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2008

Feedback from the study day:

*'I am not in any way good with cameras but this course has given me food for thought and will perhaps spur me on to have a go!'*

*'Excellent presentation, great material, accessible information.'*



Photography has been used in archaeology for many decades to improve the information that can be provided by sites. As well as using photographs to study objects, photography can provide detailed information about the extent of a site

and specific landscape features. Pictures can be taken on the ground and from the air to provide different perspectives of a site. Photos from previous excavations at a particular site can be compared with those of more recent excavations to show how the site changed over time. Photographs are a crucial aspect of a site record and any resultant publication after an excavation. They also enhance public interest in archaeology. Some of the most famous archaeologists, including Schliemann, Wheeler and Pitt-Rivers, used photography to record

their excavations. Photography has therefore consistently played an important part in the study of archaeological sites.

Eric Houlder, who has been working in archaeological photography since 1957, led this study day. The day gave us an overview of the applications and methods of photography in archaeology. It began with Eric's introduction about the background and scope of photography in archaeology and local history studies. We then looked at using the light and terrain to take good pictures



from the ground and from the air. Eric then discussed what equipment is needed, other than photographic equipment, to prepare site features for photographs. He mentioned such features as horizontals, verticals, structures and burials. Eric also talked about how to photograph documents, maps, small finds and buildings for the record, including for publication and public presentations. The day was very useful for the twenty-one participants and provided valuable information for those interested in using photography to enhance their archaeological investigations.

First picture: [http://www.crowcanyon.org/about/press\\_releases/2005\\_5\\_18\\_photography.asp](http://www.crowcanyon.org/about/press_releases/2005_5_18_photography.asp)

Second picture: <http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/archaeology/research/centreforaerialarchaeology/>