

Community Archaeology Study Days 2007/8



Conservation and Researching Finds

With Ian Panter and Nicky Rogers

Saturday, 23rd February 2008

Feedback from the study day:

'Good, clear presentation, conservation advice very useful.'

'Informal and informative, relevant to community groups.'



Much of the fascination of archaeology lies in the discovery of the many different objects used by past cultures. These artefacts provide insights into important aspects of society, from the jobs people performed to the artistic styles they valued. Much can be learned about how different people lived and worked in the past by looking at the objects

they used. Researching and conserving finds is therefore a crucial aspect of archaeological work. Many artefact specialists focus on certain objects or time periods to learn as much as possible about a culture. Conservators work to prevent the decay of fragile objects by cleaning and repairing them after excavation and maintaining them in a safe environment for continuing preservation. For example, great care is taken in museums to store and present objects in a temperature and light controlled environment. Studying finds, along with other facets of archaeological investigation such as environmental studies, allows for a more complete picture of what people in the past were like.

This study day included a discussion of the ways artefacts can be researched and conserved. The audience of twenty-three people listened to presentations and also participated in practical sessions during the afternoon. The day allowed those involved with community archaeology groups to learn more about what they can do with finds to learn about the past and to keep artefacts in good condition. Overall, the day provided those present with valuable and interesting information about artefact studies within archaeology.



First picture: <http://www.yorkarchaeology.co.uk/specialist/conserv2.htm>

Second picture: <http://saxonartefacts.com>