

## History Group



### U3A Warsop History Group Meeting

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020 in St Teresa's Church Hall, Warsop at 10:15am

There were 16 members present. Barbara welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced our speaker for today Ms Daryl Garton. **Ice Age Journey - Daryl Garton** Daryl is an Archaeologist attached to the Ice Age Journey Project, which is sponsored by; Heritage

Lottery Fund, British Geological Survey, Council British Archaeology East Midlands, Newark & Sherwood District Council, University of Oxford, Society of Antiquaries, Metropolitan Leather, and many individuals.

It is exploring the links between the major Late Upper Palaeolithic 'Ice Age' sites in the East

Midlands. These sites are important and rare; Creswell Crags and Farndon Field, both in Nottinghamshire, and Bradgate Park near Loughborough in Leicestershire. These three sites help to extend the understanding of early cultures living in what is now present day England.

All these sites were situated right at the edge of the then ice cap. The people of the Late Upper Palaeolithic were highly mobile and were the first colonisers of the East Midlands at the end of the Ice Age some 14,000 years ago. They would have witnessed dramatic changes in the landscape as the ice retreated and the climate warmed.

Several slides were shown giving the geographical position of the sites, Britain still being joined to Europe, the topography and how the temperature fluctuated but gradually rose over the millennia. The people were nomadic; following the migration of the herd animals such as Bison, moving from the lowland grasslands, where they had grazed during the winter months, to the higher lands of what is now the Derbyshire Peak District in summer. Two of the three sites are gorges, Creswell and Bradgate, meaning that the migrating herds were funnelled into a fairly restricted passage; this made hunting them much easier. The caves at Creswell would be ideal for shelter and accommodation during these hunting trips. Farndon is different in that it is surrounded by water, two rivers converge, the Devon and the Trent. Again this is an ideal spot to hunt when the animals come to cross the rivers and to drink.

Small bones have also been found at Creswell with obvious cut marks which are manmade. These bones are of Hare and have been dated to 14500 years ago.

Slides of the Creswell cave drawings were shown, including Deer and Bison. These were etched outlines of the animals and are not that visible. They would have been coloured in some way but due to weathering the colours had faded and also eroded being close to the entrance to the cave. These have been dated to being older than 14000 years ago. The flowstone of the limestone (stalactite) over parts of the drawings enables the dating to take place.

As part of the current project the volunteers and Archaeologists are learning some of the skills necessary for survival in the Ice Age including flint-knapping, deer-skin tanning

and bone-working. Daryl passed around several reproduction artefacts and modern pieces of Flint for the members to examine. A short video of Flint napping was shown. The Ice Age Journeys investigations have shown that the society of the Late Upper Palaeolithic was much more sophisticated and complex than we imagined.

The work of the Ice Age Journey is ongoing. The members showed their appreciation of a wellreceived talk in the usual manner.

**Steve Horne** gave a detailed update of the Old Hall Project and encouraged members to get involved in the archaeological investigation. There will be plenty of opportunity to do this and again dates of meetings were announced. Steve also reminded members of the annual Perambulation of the Parish Boundary with the walk to Thynghowe on the 25<sup>th</sup> April meeting at Warsop Windmill forest barrier at 10:00am, and the Viking Spring Thing weekend at Sherwood Pines, 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> May.

The meeting closed at 12:15.

**Next Meeting; Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020.** A presentation by Mel Mitchell entitle; "My Fathers War". Mel's father had been a POW and one of the camps he was at was next to Auschwitz.