

# YCCART

Yatton Congresbury Claverham and Cleeve Archaeological Research Team

Newsletter June 2017

## Chairman's chat

In this issue of the newsletter we have decided to focus on a different aspect of archaeology namely Industrial Archaeology. This is a fascinating area of study in which YCCART is actively engaged. If your interests are in this area please contact us. We are particularly interested in mining, the railways and the mills.

Finally I would like to express my thanks to Janet Dickson and Arthur Langley for the work they put into building each edition of this newsletter.

Peter English

## Riveted Boiler Drum situated in King's Wood , Congresbury

This pressure vessel is to be found between two well used tracks in King's Wood. Many of you may have walked within a couple of metres of it and not recognised it or its significance as a part of Somerset's industrial heritage.



It comprises a horizontal cylinder with domed ends. The cylindrical section is approximately 5ft in diameter and approximately 10ft 6ins long. It is made up from three rolled plates each about 42inches long. They are of slightly different



diameters giving the cylinder a stepped appearance not unlike a telescope. The domed ends are each made of seven pieces. All plates are joined by rivets. There is a closed inspection cover 22ins from one end and a 3inch diameter hole approximately half way along the length of the cylinder.

We have contacted Birmingham University who think the horizontal "egg ended" boiler will have started life in one of the local industries, possibly the Nailsea coalfield. You may ask why it was left in the wood. Close inspection of the western end may shed some light on the question. Small bore pipe leading into and out of a stone lined sump suggest it formed a reservoir or header tank for the nearby house.



Photographs of the Boiler in Kingswood and article by Peter English

## Fancy a day out?

Dave Long has received some information about Crowcombe Church House which looks really interesting. We've often spoken about having a day out and this could be a possible destination. If you have any other ideas please let me know.  
Janet - j.dickson7@sky.com



## Congresbury Romano British Pottery Kilns

The earliest of Congresbury's industries, flourished during the 3rd to 5th centuries AD, and possibly beyond this date. Many Congresbury residents still find, sherds of "Congresbury Ware" in their gardens - usually small pieces of blue-grey pottery, with, sometimes, simple decoration, which to untrained eyes certainly do not appear to be 1500 -1700 years old.

Alex Cran the vicar at Congresbury showed Gray Usher, of the North Somerset Archaeological Research Group (NSARG), a Roman coin found in the graveyard and referred him to a field to the north of Venus Street where Roman pottery had been found. It was there in 1963 that NSARG excavated a "waster" heap of pottery damaged in the firing process. In 1966 NSARG excavated two kiln sites at Yew Tree Farm, Venus Street and revealed that one type of drinking vessel found at the temple at Pagans Hill, Chew Valley, had been made in Congresbury.



*Congresbury Ware pot*

YCCCCART have been undertaking a major kiln project which includes establishing the extent of kilns sites in Congresbury. Gradiometry surveys have been undertaken and the results to date can be viewed online at [www.ycccart.co.uk](http://www.ycccart.co.uk) under Publications/Reports/Congresbury/Congresbury Kilns. The report YCCCCART report 2016/Y4, shows the extent of known kilns.

Chris Short



*Excavated kiln site. Photograph courtesy of D Lilly.*



### *Extent of known sites - Index*

*Large dots indicate position of excavated examples*

*Medium size dots indicate probable kilns from geophysical surveys*

*Smallest dots indicate potential kiln sites from geophysical surveys*  
*Stars are known 'waster' spreads*



## Vince's Corner - Iron

Iron (Fe, atomic number 26) is Earth's most abundant element. It accounts for over 90% of world metal production, and has been smelted in Britain since the 7th century BC. It is responsible for the colours of: pottery (red if oxidised, grey if reduced), of blood (in haemoglobin), and planet Mars (iron (III) oxides).

In Congresbury and Yatton, iron ore from King's Wood was smelted during the Roman period: remains of bloomery processing were found at Cobthorn Way and Arnold's Way recently. The availability of ore, wood for charcoal, and water transport on the Congresbury Yeo made this possible.



Copthorne Find - Iron Ore Slag 2016

© YCCCART

An example of iron ore processing slag from Cobthorn, Congesbury. Photographs by John Wilcox.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

YCCCART social event Friday September 8TH  
Keep this date free (if you can!)

Philippa and I are organising an evening social event for all YCCCART members and their partners at The Old School Rooms, Congresbury on Friday September 8th, 7.00 for 7.30pm. Jane Brine, who is well known to many of our group, will be catering for us.

More details to follow later.  
Janet

### Other dates for your diary

YCCCART will be mounting a display at Yatton's Masonic Lodge's Community Afternoon on September 2nd. If you feel able to support this event please let a committee member know.

Don't forget the two village fetes which are being held this July. Any help to erect or man the displays will be greatly appreciated.

Congresbury- July 1st Yatton July 29th

Janet - j.dickson7@sky.com

In the eighteenth century, an iron slitting mill worked in Congresbury, shown on the 1736 map on the site of the West Mill. These mills rolled bars of iron (some from Sweden and Russia!), to produce iron nails, one of the earliest mass productions in the Industrial Revolution.



The base of a Roman bloomery furnace under excavation at Cobthorn Way, Congresbury in 2016.

Iron mining in King's Wood became a large industry again in the 19th century, mining beginning in 1847, with the ore removed to Yatton station and sent to south Wales: this industry is responsible for most of the mines and shafts in King's Wood, but was short-lived, as there is no trace of it on the 1885 OS map.



Two more examples of iron ore processing slag from Cobthorn, Congesbury. Photographs by John Wilcox.

Vince Russett