**Thursday 25th April 2019, 9.00-13.00**

**WHOSE ARCHAEOLOGY IS IT ANYWAY? ENGAGEMENT WITH ARCHIVES BEYOND THE DIG** Organiser(s): Gail Boyle (Bristol Culture) & Adam Corsini (Museum of London)

How do people engage with archaeological archives beyond the point of excavation and what are the benefits and for whom? Archaeological material is increasingly being used to meet a variety 3 of health and wellbeing agendas, to address social inclusion and to promote personal development. This session will explore the multiple ways that archaeological material is being used to engage and inspire people of all ages, in museums, by units and within communities. From supporting the delivery of the national curriculum to providing the evidence base for postdoctoral research, from delivering innovative volunteer projects to widening participation for marginalised groups, these papers will reveal why sometimes it’s important to realise that connecting people with collections is often not just about the archaeology. Technology permitting, delegates will be able to both witness and participate in a live-streamed session of the Museum of London Archaeological Archive’s award-winning #ArchiveLottery.

**9.35 – 10.00**

**Your DIG - Working Towards a Model of Participatory Interpretation.**

Your DIG, York Archaeological Trust’s new Community Engagement Programme, is a series of collaborative exhibitions highlighting a range of community-led initiatives from across York and the wider Yorkshire region. Hosted at “DIG, An Archaeological Adventure” in York, the Your DIG exhibitions are a platform for local people to show off their own adventures in archaeology to visitors. YAT recently worked with participants from Converge (a partnership between York St John University and local mental health service providers) to devise, develop and co-curate a Your DIG exhibition. Together we explored a site archive excavated in 1972 using drama, artwork, music and creative writing to make interpreting archaeological evidence a fun and engaging experience. This paper will explore the participatory interpretation techniques used during this Your DIG project and consider what might be next for the program.

Jen Jackson, Community Engagement Manager

**10.00-10.30**

Archive Artefacts at Work

This paper discusses how the University of Reading and the Museum of London collaborated to energise and maximise the potential of one of the country’s best preserved collections of Roman tools. In challenging times for both organisations, the overall results of the PhD demonstrated how the project unlocked benefits for academic research, museum archaeology and the visiting public. Over 900 tools were catalogued. These objects gave an insight into practices which are otherwise almost invisible; woodwork, leatherwork, fine metalworking and urban farming to name a few. In doing so, these objects provide new perspectives on the social, technological, and economic life of the city and its inhabitants, (including evidence of specialisation and cross-craft interaction, changing working practices, immigration and colonial exploitation). The project highlights how re-examination of archival material can produce new findings and disseminate these to museum visitors via public display.

Owen Humphries, Registered Finds Specialist, MOLA

**10.30-11.00**

**Engaging with the curriculum at Glastonbury Abbey: History Around Us and Tactile Access**

What can medieval monastic archaeology offer the UK history curriculum and how can we use archival collections to provide something which can’t be replicated in the classroom? This paper examines one strand of the AHRC Follow-on Funding project ‘Glastonbury Abbey: archaeology, legend and public engagement’. The project built on the research impact of Professor Roberta Gilchrist’s analysis and publication of Glastonbury Abbey’s archaeological archives (Gilchrist 2015). Through a collaboration with the learning and curatorial team at Glastonbury Abbey, The Schools History Project, local networks of history teachers, and tactile access expert Charlotte Dew we were able to develop a series of learning resources which engaged school audiences directly with the materiality of the stored collections and the standing ruins. Two replicable elements which will be discussed were a regional collaboration around the new GCSE (OCR) History Around Us module and a tactile access programme focussing on small finds.

Rhi Smith

**BREAK – 11.00-11.30**

**11.30-12.00**

**Small finds, big impact: volunteer empowerment in the Portable Antiquities Scheme**

In 2014, the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) launched the HLF-funded PASt Explorers project with the aim of growing and supporting our volunteer base. Since it began over 500 volunteers have been involved with the project, recording finds and adding to our shared knowledge of the past.

But the impact has been far greater than the number of finds recorded.

This talk will demonstrate how the public can be involved in all stages of the archaeological process, from finding the objects to producing the data, using the data and sharing the data with their local communities (and beyond). By empowering volunteers with the right tools and training, we have fostered an environment in which members of the public are confident engaging with archaeology and contributing to the archaeological record. This talk will discuss how we’ve done this and what the benefits are, not just for PAS but for the volunteers themselves.

Lauren Speed

Outreach Officer, PASt Explorers Project

**12.00-12.30**

**Reconnecting with the River: Two cases studies of engagement through artefacts**

The Thames Discovery Programme is a community archaeology project that monitors and records the fast eroding archaeology of the Thames foreshore. Over the last two years, project funding from the City Bridge Trust and Tideway has enabled the TDP to expand the audiences of its work, focusing on Londoners over 75 and with schools and young people. This paper will focus on how finds handling sessions have been used with both of these new strands of the project. In particular it will focus on how events for older Londoners have used finds to encourage reminiscence, conversation and engagement with local heritage, inspiring both participants and staff new insights. It will also discuss the importance of tactile learning for children in their engagement with archaeology and the heritage of their city, alongside visits to archaeological sites along the Tidal Thames.

Joshua Frost Senior Community Archaeologist

**12.30-13.00**

**#ArchiveLottery – a different kind of digital engagement**

​Interested in how social media can be used to disseminate archaeology within your collection? Then discover the Museum of London's #ArchiveLottery. Using Twitter, Skype and Periscope, #ArchiveLottery offers an innovative approach to rediscovering artefacts within your collection using alternative object engagement and enhanced visitor experiences. Join us for a live demonstration with an interactive twist.

Adam Corsini, Archaeological Archive Manager, Museum of London