

Case 4 Excavation Assemblage from Rothes Golf Course

During landscaping works at Rothes Golf Course in 2011, a collection of pottery, a flint and a complete All Over Corded (“AOC”) beaker were uncovered – indicating a burial site. The beaker and flint were first displayed in 2016, but this is the first time the whole assemblage has been on show.

A programme of archaeological investigation was then carried out by GUARD Archaeology. This included a topographic survey, geophysical survey and small-scale excavation. No further features were found, only one additional piece of flint and a piece of cramp. The presence of cramp at the site is evidence of cremation having taken place here, as it is the byproduct of high-temperature burning: fused sand and organic material, often including burnt bone fragments.

The beaker when recovered was full, and it was unknown if it contained anything. Using x-ray analysis and careful excavation in their lab, GUARD archaeologists investigated the beaker. Sadly no finds were inside, nor any human remains, however charcoal and charred seeds were recovered. This allowed dating analysis, giving a date range of 2461 – 2207 BC this places it firmly in the Bronze Age. The Rothes AOC beaker is quite different to others found in Scotland, especially because of its small size (only 8.5cm tall) – it is the smallest of its type ever found.

Analysis of the flint blade confirmed this was likely Late Neolithic in date, around 2500 BC, and probably from Yorkshire. Further study of the pottery sherds (smaller, broken pieces of pottery) showed these had a different pattern decoration than the whole beaker. Bands of herringbone pattern and linear bands can be seen. This means there were at least two burials at this site.

17. All Over Corded (“AOC”) beaker (ELGNM: 2016.26.1)

18. Flint Blade (ELGNM: 2016.26.3)

19. Four Pottery Sherds (ELGNM: 2016.26.2)

20. Cramp (ELGNM: 2016.26.5)



Figure 1: All Over Corded ("AOC") beaker (ELGNM: 2016.26.1)



Figure 2: Flint Blade (ELGNM: 2016.26.3)



Figure 3: Four Pottery Sherds (ELGNM: 2016.26.2)



Figure 4: Cramp (ELGNM: 2016.26.5)