

Migration & Memory

REPORT



A few hundred yards away from Egham town centre, wedged between a 1970s hotel complex and the M25, is a patch of land that is Runnymede's only Scheduled Monument. First excavated in 1976, and then again in the 1980s, the site revealed a wealth of nationally important Bronze Age finds, the majority of which are now held in the British Museum.

Throughout 2016, the Migration & Memory project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enabled Egham Museum to explore this excavation and associated finds, and to recreate a picture of what life would have been like for our Bronze Age ancestors.



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The Documentary

A key part of the project was to recruit a **Project Manager** who was also a skilled Director and could lead on the development of the full documentary and micro-documentaries.

We hired Bill Thisdell who fulfilled this brief. Bill made contact with archaeologists, curators and experts and arranged interviews with a core group of five. He also secured the artistic talents of **illustrator** Simon Clarke.

Between February and November 2016, Bill carried out interviews and based on the information gathered, scripted the **narrative** of the documentary with the support of Egham Museum volunteer, Kathleen Eaton.

Further scene-setting footage was then gathered, and the team collaborated with Simon on required animations that brought to life the **stories** being told.

Watch the documentary: www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNd0vOSyM80&t



Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge



**BRONZE AGE
BRITAIN**

“Well done. I have already seen an enthusiastic comment about the documentary from an Historic England prehistorian.”

David Bird FSA



“I enjoyed hearing the different points and also seeing the bits from the early filming.”

Dr Marie Louise Sørensen



We received great feedback from the interviewees themselves and other experts in the field, including a write up in *Salon* (number 377, December 2016), the online newsletter of the Society of Antiquaries, by Mike Pitt.

“*Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge*, a gentle, captivating film, was published on YouTube on 16 November by Egham Museum. It is about a large archaeological excavation in the 1980s, and features Fellows David Bird FSA, Jon Cotton FSA and Marie Louise Sørensen FSA, with Heather Knight and Neil Wilkin, explaining the site and the nature of archaeological evidence; there is also an appearance from a younger excavation director Stuart Needham FSA in British Museum archive film. In the 36-minute film the archaeologists talk about what might have been happening, and what people might have been thinking – Sørensen on jealousy, falling in love and gender relations, Bird on humour and music, Cotton on surviving climatic change – at a time of social upheaval in the Late Bronze Age. Directed by Bill Thisdell, the film is intercut with animations by Simon Clark. It was funded through a Our Heritage, Heritage Lottery Funded project. ‘We have to let the past speak to us through how it works,’ says Sørensen, ‘rather than make the past just what we like it to be.’”

We officially launched the *Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge* documentary at a community screening event on Friday 11th November 2016. It was attended by **over 50** people from the local community including local Council representatives, University staff and students, neighbouring businesses, and Museum volunteers.



The film has since been awarded **Best Documentary** at The London Monthly Film Festival in 2016.

(www.londonmonthlyfilmfest.com)



In November, it was accepted to the Wolves Independent **International Film Awards**, the outcome of which we will hear later in 2017.

(www.ramuno-atelje.eu/)



The documentary was introduced by David Barker, one of the first people to discover pre-historic pottery on the site of Runnymede Bridge when out walking. David is a member of the Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society and an amateur archaeologist who took part in the excavations.

David Barker: www.youtube.com/watch?v=3u8pCdPhk4M&t



Community Screening & Publicity

Promotion of the documentary via social media was a key aim.

We have received **386 views** to date on YouTube since 16th November 2016. On Twitter for November alone, Tweets about the documentary contributed to over **16,700 impressions** being made.



Heather Knight @Heather1576 Following

@EghamMuseum - the film of the Runnymede Bridge excavation is fab!

RETWEETS 3 LIKES 2

8:53 PM - 11 Nov 2016 from Egham, South East

Matthew Smith @MattSmithRHUL Following

Excellent new documentary on Bronze Age Runnymede from @EghamMuseum. @RHULPublicHist students should take a look!

Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge

Before the M25 was built in this stretch of Surrey, archaeologists discovered one of the greatest Bronze Age sites in the UK. Now a Scheduled Monument, the a...

youtube.com

RETWEETS 3 LIKES 4

8:36 PM - 16 Nov 2016

CambridgeArchaeology @UCamArchaeology Follow

WATCH: Interested in Bronze Age Britain? From @EghamMuseum Excavations at Runnymede w/ Prof Marie Louise Sorensen

Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge

Before the M25 was built in this stretch of Surrey, archaeologists discovered one of the greatest Bronze Age sites in the UK. Now a Scheduled Monument, the a...

youtube.com

RETWEETS 4 LIKES 3

4:19 PM - 7 Dec 2016

Dr Rachel Pope @preshitorian · 12 Dec 2016

TV history is all so much about 'us' you know. I want to know about who we were before that.

Amara Thornton @amaalexathorn Follow

Replying to @preshitorian

have you see egham museum bronze age Runnymede documentary? Does the discovery and interpretation combo v well I think.

LIKE 1

8:02 AM - 12 Dec 2016

Neil Wilkin @NWilkinBM Follow

A great short film about the important #BronzeAge site at Runnymede Bridge by @EghamMuseum - nice work!

Bronze Age Runnymede: Excavations at Runnymede Bridge

Before the M25 was built in this stretch of Surrey, archaeologists discovered one of the greatest Bronze Age sites in the UK. Now a Scheduled Monument, the a...

youtube.com

RETWEETS 9 LIKES 12

6:24 PM - 30 Nov 2016 from Camden Town, London

Tweet your reply

Neil Wilkin @NWilkinBM · 30 Nov 2016

Replying to @NWilkinBM @EghamMuseum

Could be one for you @urbanprehisto? Is motorway prehistory a sub genre?

Egham Museum @EghamMuseum · 30 Nov 2016

Replying to @NWilkinBM

Thanks Neil, glad you like it.

Neil Wilkin
@NWilkinBM FOLLOWS YOU
Curator of the European Bronze Age collections @britishmuseum_team @Grave_Goods, PhD, FSA Scot. museums, prehistory, public archaeology - tweets my own
britishmuseum.academia.edu/NeilWilkin
Joined December 2013

Micro-documentaries & Schools

What was the Bronze Age?



Life in a Bronze Age settlement



Links with the wider World



Why is Runnymede an important site?



We created a series of four further micro-documentaries. They have been designed to provide engaging ways for pupils to explore key themes within the Bronze Age period and answer questions that can support **learning in a classroom** environment.

They are aimed to suit **Key Stage 2** who are working through the history National Curriculum covering topics in relation to “changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age”, supporting pupils with:

- developing chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods
- connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms
- understanding of how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

“They are excellent. I think the length really lends itself to in-class videos as you don't lose much learning time but there is lots of information in there. The animation style they use is really nice and the fact that it's linked to the local area makes it relevant too. Some really nice, well produced videos.”

Mr Brain, Hythe PS teacher

We were delighted to work with **Hythe Community Primary School**, who we funded to visit the British Museum in March 2017 as part of their ongoing learning.



Egham Museum
@EghamMuseum

We hope [@TheHytheSchool](#) Yr5 & Mr Brain have a great time [@britishmuseum](#). Enjoy Room 51, which is full of [#Runnymede](#) Bronze Age finds!

The Hythe [@TheHytheSchool](#)

Year 5 are visiting [@britishmuseum](#) today. Huge thanks to [@EghamMuseum](#) for helping with travel costs.

RETWEET

1

LIKES

4



11:29 AM - 1 Mar 2017



1



4



Bronze Age Mini-Dig

To support Bronze Age learning at the museum, we produced new interpretation panels that set the broad pre-historic scene. Complementing this, volunteer Kathleen Eaton created a Bronze Age **Mini-Dig** for young visitors to be archaeologists and discover replica Bronze Age artefacts.

This has proved a popular addition to the museum, and something we hope to develop.



Outcomes

Migration & Memory has been a **successful project** for Egham Museum, and as a result:

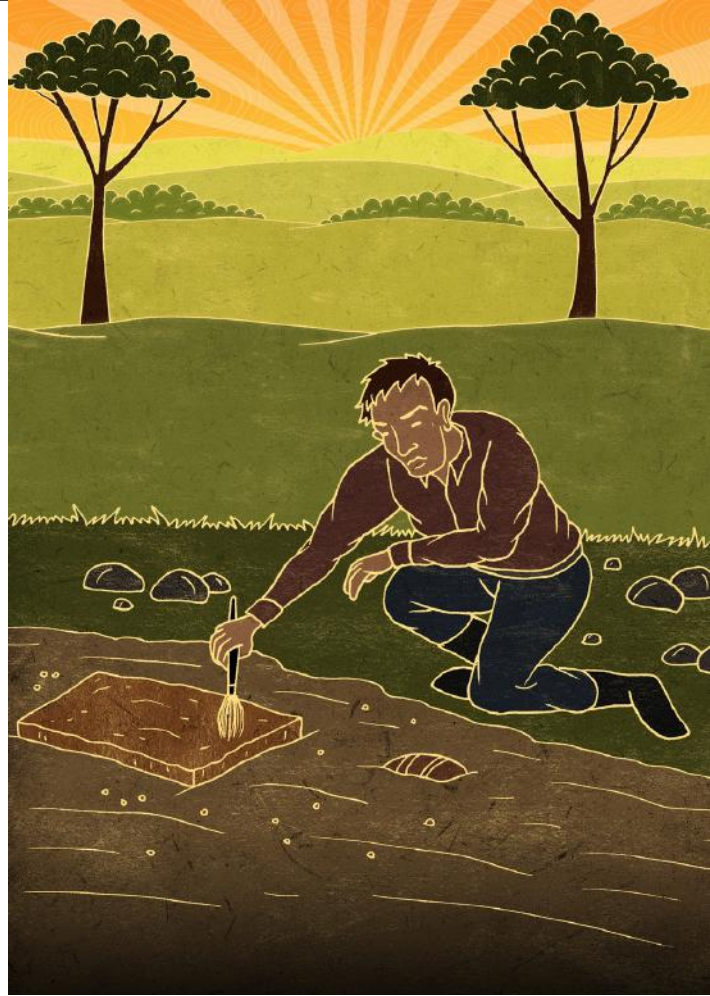
- heritage has been identified/recorded
- heritage is better interpreted and explained
- people have learnt about heritage
- people have had an enjoyable experience
- people have volunteered time
- more people and a wider range of people have engaged with heritage

Challenges

An initial objective for this project was to draw parallels from early pre-historic evidence of migration to today by interviewing 15-20 local residents, including older people, economic migrants, and international students, on their experiences of coming to the area.

The idea and evidence of migration and settlement wasn't really clear from our research and interviews with experts. Bronze Age Runnymede was essentially the home to seasonal gatherings where people celebrated together each year. This was different to our initial idea that Neolithic and Bronze Age people permanently settled in the area. Alongside this was the timing of the EU referendum, Brexit, and the subsequent press coverage and attitudes and concerns to and of migrants. As a result, we felt it was not suitable to pursue this angle to the depth and sensitivity that it deserved within the limitations of this project.

A further challenge was the change in Egham Museum's Curator throughout this project. This meant there was some delay to our anticipated schedule.



**Funding raised by
The National Lottery**

and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



LOTTERY FUNDED



www.eghammuseum.org/pre-history/bronze-age/