

# RANDALL MANOR SEASON 10, SHORNE WOODS COUNTRY PARK, KENT

July 25, 2015 Andrew Mayfield Buildings, Community Archaeology, Excavation, Explore Posts, Medieval, Periods @ArchaeologyKent, Kent, Randall Manor, shorne woods country park, volunteering, [www.facebook.com/archaeologyinkent](http://www.facebook.com/archaeologyinkent)



*Randall Manor, SE corner of platform, eastern annex building*



*Randall Manor Team photo 2015*

I wasn't sure last year, when writing a post for Day of Archaeology 2014, that there would be a Randall Manor season 10. We had come to the end of our Lottery funded project work and had support from Kent County Council to complete the ninth season (which finally wrapped up in November 2014, after many happy extra volunteer week day hours)...At the start of this year, conversations amongst the incredible archaeology volunteer team I work with inevitably turned to enquiries about a Season 10. As we lacked funds, we decided to keep it short and sweet and limited to an 8-day season (with likely post dig volunteer days to follow 😊 ). A plan was devised (and debated!) to keep to two excavation areas, with clear aims:

**A.)** An old area to the south of our aisled hall building (dated to the second half of the thirteenth century), was to be revisited and a possible second garderobe structure investigated (we have previously investigated a very nice chalk lined garderobe pit in the service wing of our main building complex, complete with sloped flint cobble floor and stone lined opening/access). We also wanted to test a theory that at the back of the aisled hall there may be clay ramps, revetted with stone, acting as access to the building complex during its demolition.

**B.)** The second area of investigation in 2015 was the SE corner of the Manor platform, where we wanted to investigate both the north wall and eastern annex to a building first uncovered last year...

## SEASON 10

The Day of Archaeology sees us on **Day 6** of this short tenth season. Despite the deluge today, we are on course to meet the objectives of our dig this year. We now think that the possible garderobe structure was supported by two large wooden posts. As we seem to be below any surviving 'use' levels, we cannot be categorical about our interpretation and it is possible that the surviving structure could also be the base of a stairwell, accessing the back of the aisled hall. We do have a well defined north-south running drainage gully running along the west side of the aisled hall, kept in use until the buildings are demolished, perhaps 300 years later...In our second area we have found and exposed the north wall of the building and the eastern annex, which appears to be stone and chalk built, with its own entrance passage...

As the rain continues to pour outside, it only remains for me to pay tribute to the continuing enthusiasm, passion and sense of fun of the archaeology volunteers I work with. They make even the most mundane tasks such as grid setting out a pleasure. On a day like today, we still had 12 people turn up, desperate to take part and once driven in by the rain, everyone mucked in with getting kit stowed away, finds processed and paperwork completed.

Even if there is no season 11 (and who knows there might be!!), whatever project we move on to next, I know that the volunteers will make it just as engaging and fulfilling as the Manor has been.

**ANDREW.**

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