

## Understanding Our Past

### Exploring the Hidden History of Meldreth

Dr Carenza Lewis, a former Time Team presenter, will be speaking in Meldreth Village Hall on Saturday 23rd March, when Meldreth Local History Group's latest project is officially launched.

The Group was one of the first in the country to be awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund All Our Stories grant and will be using the money to fund the digging of 20-30 test pits at different locations in Meldreth.

All our Stories, a brand new small grant programme, launched in 2012 in support of BBC Two's The Great British Story, has been designed as an opportunity for everyone to get involved in their heritage. The popular TV series, presented by historian Michael Wood and supported by a programme of BBC Learning activities and events, got thousands of us asking questions about our history and inspired us to look at our history in a different way through the eyes of ordinary people.

Robin Llewellyn, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund East of England, said "Clearly the success of All Our Stories

*Items from the late Bronze age Meldreth Hoard. Photograph by Robert Skeen of Meldreth Local History Group, courtesy of the British Museum. More information on the Meldreth Hoard is available at [www.meldrethhistory.org.uk/hoard](http://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk/hoard).*



*has reinforced the fact that we are indeed a nation of story tellers and that we want to explore and dig deeper into our past and discover more about what really matters to us. This is exactly what the grant will do for Meldreth Local History Group as it embarks on a real journey of discovery."*

Throughout the project, the Group will be working closely with Dr Carenza Lewis, head of Cambridge University's Cambridge Community Heritage unit. Dr Lewis has overseen the digging of hundreds of test pits in over 50 villages throughout the east of England as part of the Currently Rural Settlement (CORS) project and the results from the Meldreth digs will be added to the data already collected to build up an overall picture of how rural settlements in the region have developed.

#### When Will the Digs Take Place?

Test pits will be dug over three different weekends in June, July and August. Further information will be provided at the meeting on 23rd March, when we will be inviting people to come forward if they wish to participate in the project. Meldreth residents will be able to put their garden or land forward as a possible location for a test pit. We will also be looking for volunteers to help with the project and participate in the digs.

#### What Will We Find?

The most significant archaeological find to have come from Meldreth is the late Bronze Age 'Meldreth Hoard', which was discovered in the village in the late nineteenth century. While we don't expect to find another hoard, it is hoped that the artefacts found during the project will tell us more about how Meldreth developed and evolved.

#### The Results

Findings from the project will be published on our website [www.meldrethhistory.org.uk](http://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk) and in the local press. We will also be holding an exhibition in Meldreth at the conclusion of the project.

For further information, please come along to Meldreth Village Hall at 4.00 pm on Saturday 23rd March, follow the link from our website's home page, [www.meldrethhistory.org.uk](http://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk), email [info@meldrethhistory.org.uk](mailto:info@meldrethhistory.org.uk) or telephone Kathryn Betts on (01763) 268428.