

*These photos are a remarkable record of past activity within a now submerged prehistoric intertidal marshland. Duane has captured the rich diversity of species present at various times. The wolf and aurochs prints are particularly fascinating as they represent species no longer found in the British Isles. The wild boar hoof prints are also a rare find. Much like the records from Formby Point further south, Duane's photos vividly show the movement of several species on the mudflats, all navigating the marshes on the same day. This remarkable documentation gives us a glimpse into the thriving coastal populations that existed before the advent of farming. Duane's dedicated work has added a valuable archive to the history of Millom, and it undoubtedly warrants further research to enhance our understanding of prehistoric life in Northern England. Dr Alison Burns*

A Millom and District Local History Society Publication,  
Sponsored by Local Donations &



## THE PREHISTORIC FOOTPRINTS OF MILLOM:

Dedicated to Duane Farren

Jan Bridget

# PURPOSE

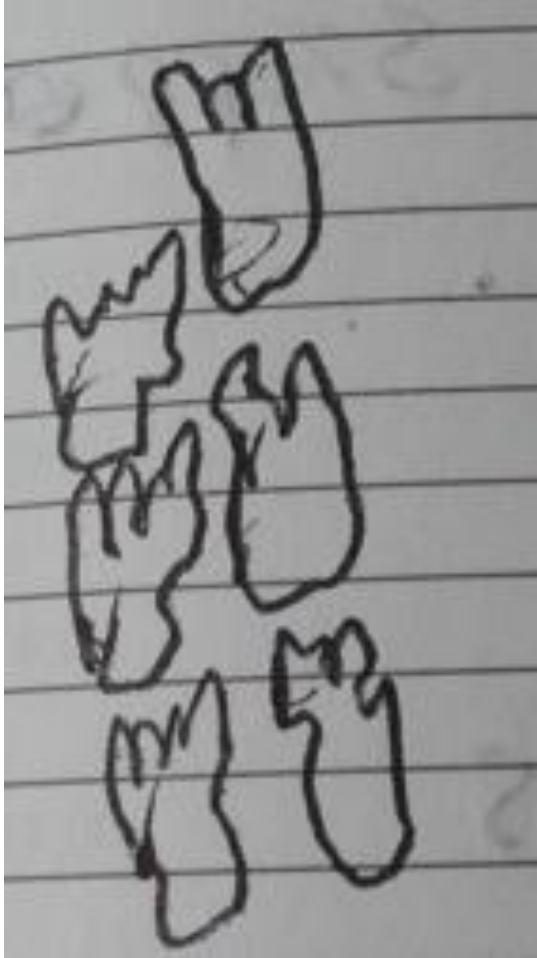
- **Celebrate and acknowledge Duane's work**
- **Glimpse his incredible photograph archive**
- **Encourage further research**

**THE HISTORY OF DUANE  
FARREN**

**SHARON FARREN**

# **DUANE'S DIARY**

# 2017 DIARY



***2<sup>nd</sup> September:  
Had a great day,  
found a pair of 8  
footprints, looks  
like they had been  
stalking an animal.***

# **DISCOVERING ARCHIVE**

# TRIBUTE



In memory  
of



**Duane Farren**  
Respected local historian  
and metal detectorist.  
At rest in this churchyard

# SEVEN FOLDERS



# 850 PHOTOGRPHS



**CONTEXT**

# **BRIEF OVERVIEW**

## **– MILLOM EVIDENCE**

- **MESOLITHIC**
- **NEOLITHIC**
- **BRONZE AGE**
- **IRON AGE**

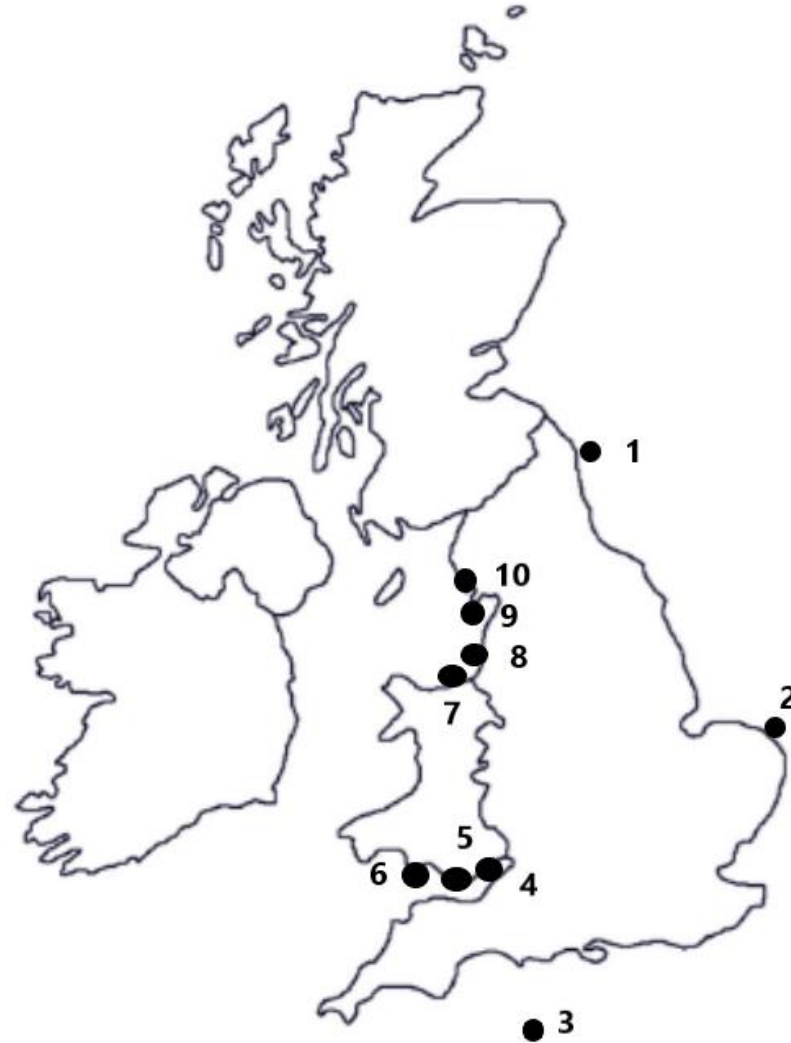


## **Millom and District Prehistoric Past**

**Jan Bridget**

**FOOTPRINTS**

# LOCATIONS







**Alison Burns**

# THE PREHISTORIC FOOTPRINTS AT FORMBY

**Discover the footprints on the Sefton Coast  
and take a glimpse into prehistoric Britain**

# FORMATION

- Warm weather, water low enough for reed beds and mudflats to dry and harden having caught prints of whatever walked over them
- Mud and peat – estuaries, water-logged, lack oxygen organic matter accumulates quicker than decompose
- Over years trapped sediments and plant material form thick, organic rich soil layers
- Can therefore get dates from layers of mudflats

# FORMBY POINT



- Retired school teacher
- Heard about them in 1985
- Found them in 1989
- Been known about since 1950's
- Universities know about them
- Left to monitor
- 25 years
- Own website, book

# UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



- 6 YEAR STUDY
- CORE SAMPLES
- MATCHED WITH PRINTS
- DATES MESOLITHIC TO MEDIEVAL
- SEVERAL LOTS OF MUDFLATS

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# DUDDON FORESHORE



**WHAT TO LOOK  
FOR?**

**MUDFLATS**



















# WHEN APPEAR?

- Not there all of the time.
- Usually appear after a very high tide or a storm.
- Best to go and look about two hours after high tide.
- Make sure you are safe and the tide is NOT coming in.
- High tide and storms erode the sand and sand dunes revealing mudflats
- If footprints are revealed, only usually there for a week or two as tide washes them away (or they can be covered up again with sand).

# WATER LOGGED



# WATER LOGGED



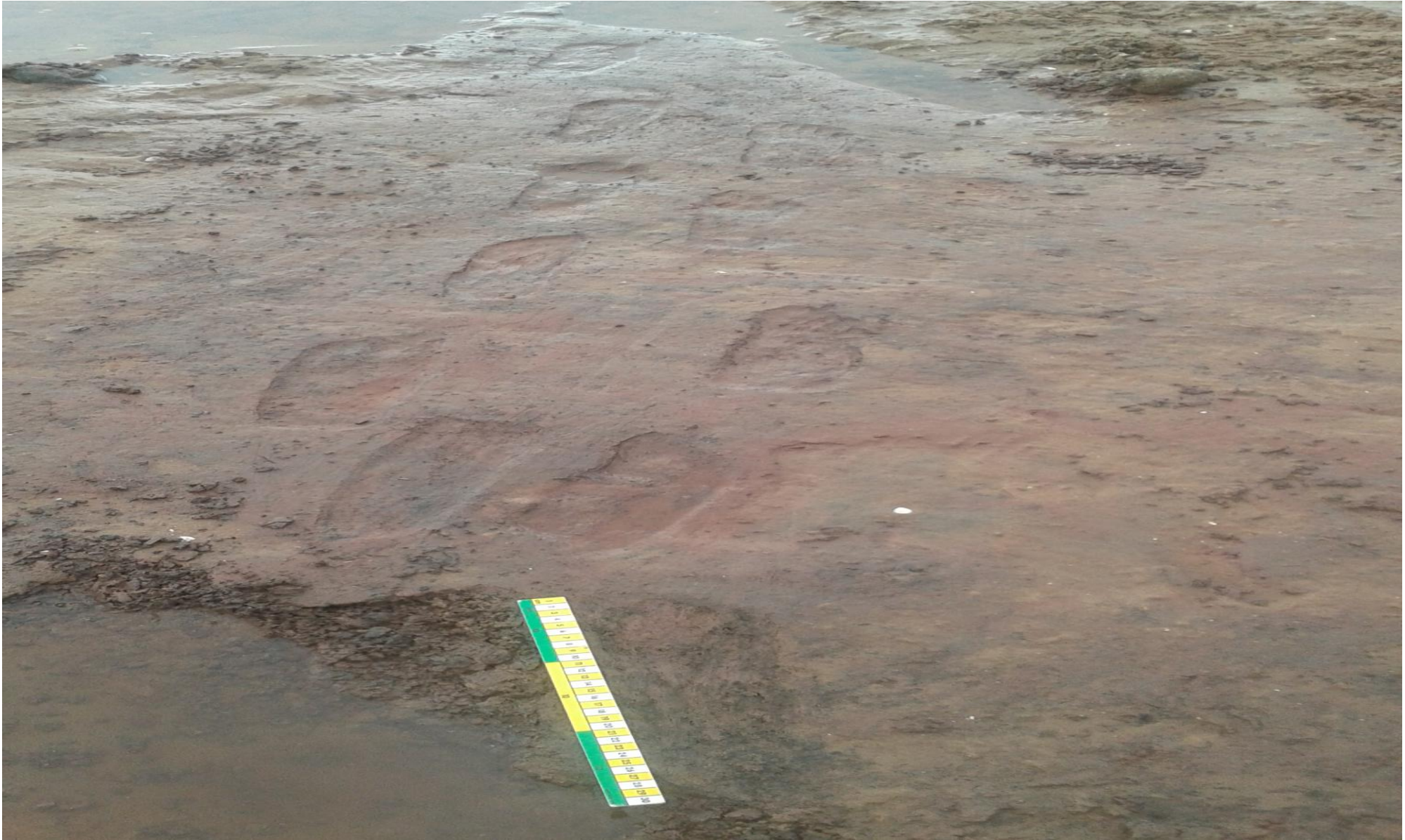




# **HUMAN FOOTPRINTS**



























# **ANIMAL FOOTPRINTS**

**WOLF**









**WILD BOAR**





# BEAVER



# AUROCHS

EXTINCT IN BRITAIN BRONZE AGE



At the Lascaux Cave in France, a large bull was drawn over earlier paintings of wild cattle more than 10,000 years ago. Scientists are using ancient depictions like these to re-create the animals. *Credit: Universal History Archive/UIG via Getty Images*

# MUNCASTER – DUANE'S GT GRANDFATHER FISHING OFF RAVENGLASS



# AUROCHS

- Huge cow
- Ferocious
- Extinct in British Isles through hunting In Bronze Age
- Last one in Poland in 1627



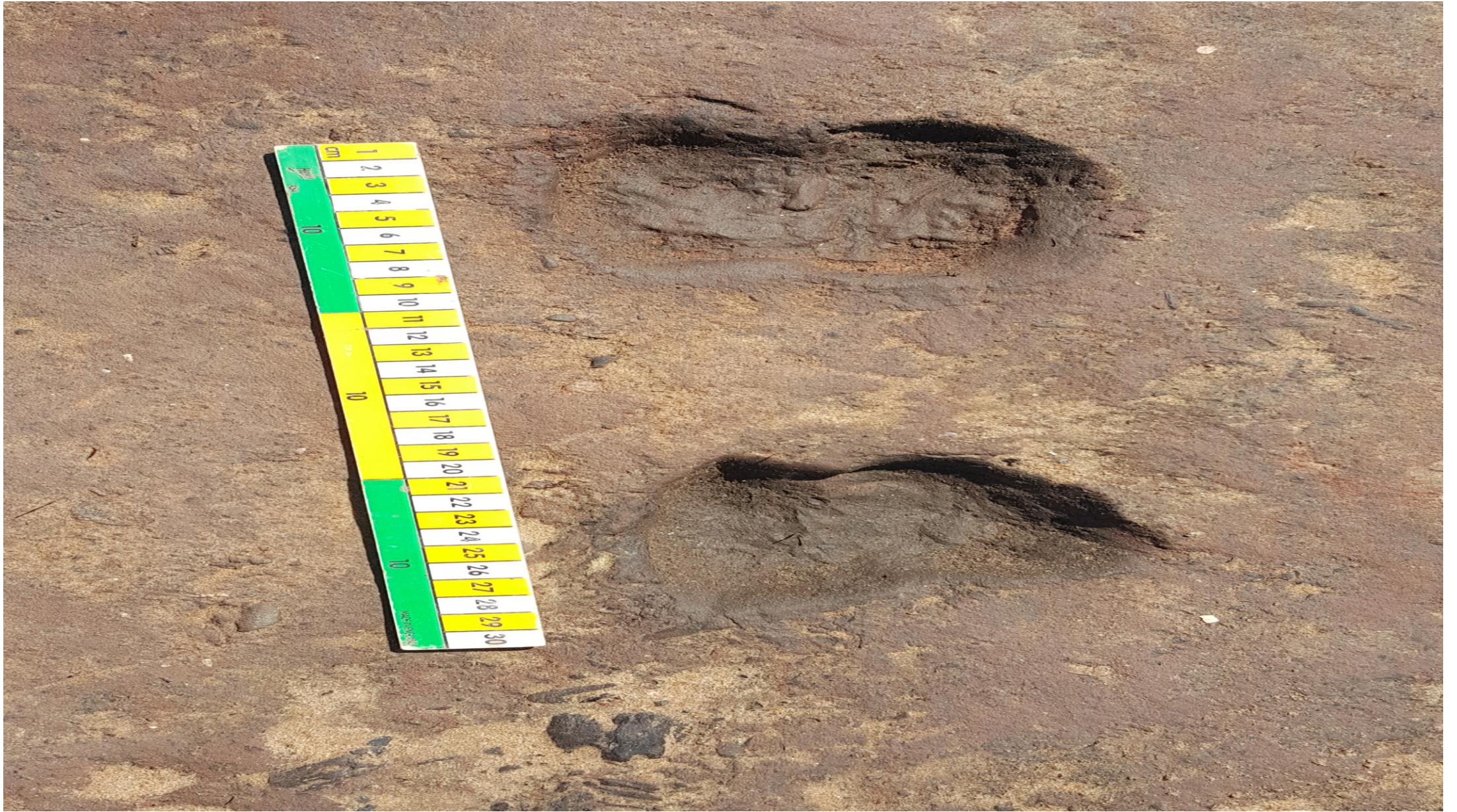










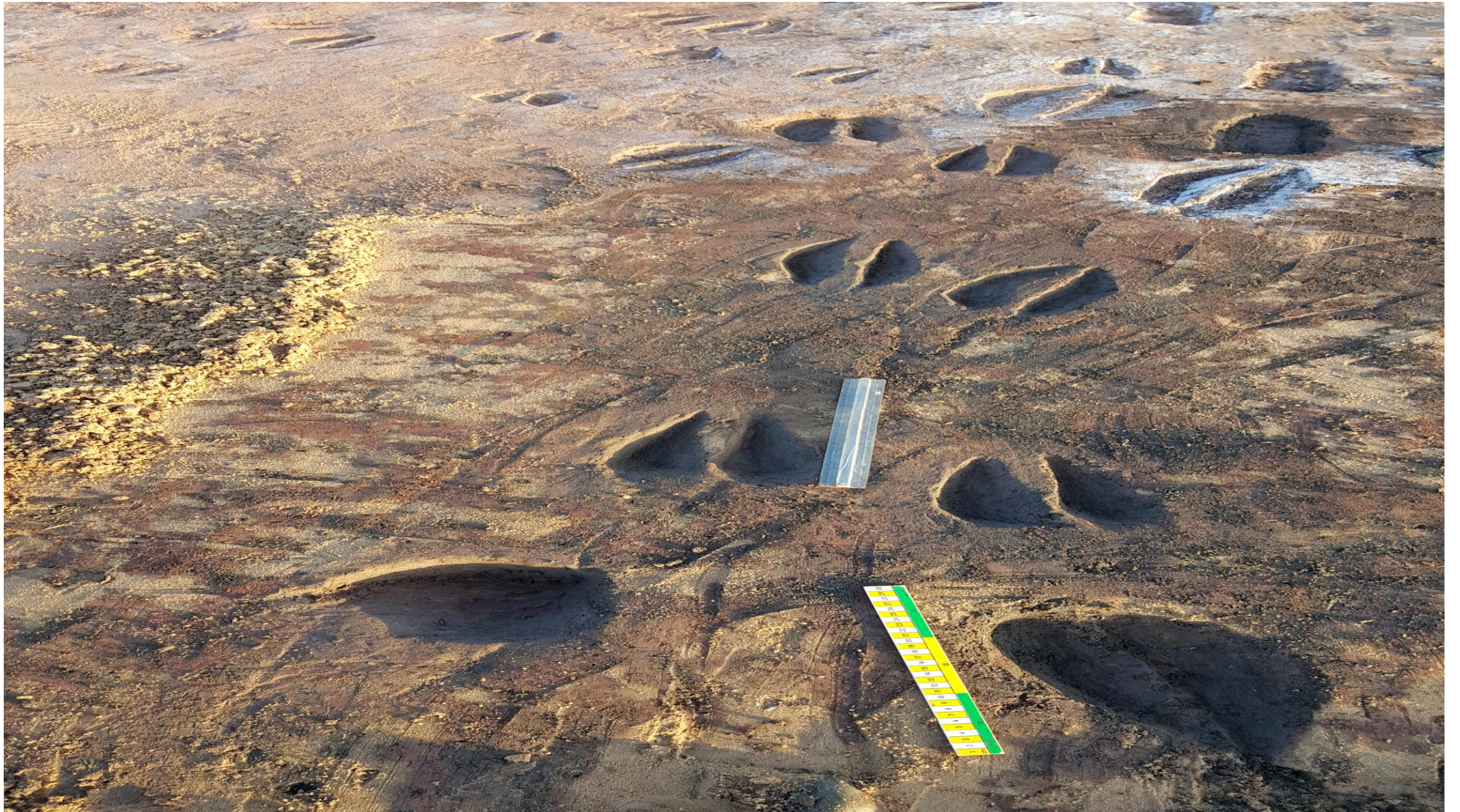


**RED DEER**

# AUROCHS, RED DEER HUMAN











**ROE DEER**

# AUROCHS, HUMAN, ROE DEER



**TWINE**

# **CRITICAL TRANSFORMATIVE TECHNOLOGY**

- TWISTING PLANT FIBRES
- FLAX
- HEMP
- NETTLE
- WILLOW BARK
- OR ANIMAL: SINEW, HIDE, HAIR

# USES IN PREHISTORIC TIMES

- Fishing nets, lines, snares
- Bow strings
- Tying arrow heads/spear heads/harpoons
- Sewing skin clothes moccasins
- Bags, baskets
- Shelter, rafts, mats
- Bow drills to make fire
- Woven into material for clothing, bedding













95  
95  
| 66 95





# YORK ARCHAEOLOGY

- CGP Grant
- Specialist assessment £420
- Examined under a binocular microscope at x20 magnification
- Several twisted twine ties made from vegetable fibres, tentatively identified as flax
- Three small nut shells, suspected to be hazelnut through light microscopy at x400 magnification
- Radiocarbon dating is advised to establish the age of the twine and to inform whether further specialist investigation is appropriate.
- If appropriate: determination of the object's function, form, manufacturing methods, provenance, parallels, and broader archaeological or ethnographic context.

# BETA ANALYTIC, MIAMI, USA £1,350

Conventional Radiocarbon Age **110 +/- 30 BP**

Ratio of Stable Isotopes **IRMS  $\delta^{13}C$ : -23.80  $\pm$  0.30 o/oo**

## 95.4% Probability Calibrated Range(s)

<b>(68.1%)</b>	<b>1800 - 1939 cal AD</b>	<b>(150 - 11 cal BP)</b>
<b>(25.5%)</b>	<b>1682 - 1738 cal AD</b>	<b>(268 - 212 cal BP)</b>
<b>(1.2%)</b>	<b>1754 - 1761 cal AD</b>	<b>(196 - 189 cal BP)</b>
<b>(0.6%)</b>	<b>1953 - 1954 cal AD</b>	<b>(-3 - -4 cal BP)</b>
<b>(0.1%)</b>	<b>1941 - 1941 cal AD</b>	<b>(9 - 9 cal BP)</b>

Submitter Material Textile

Pretreatment (Textile):acid/alkali/acid: cellulose extraction: solvent extraction

Analyzed Material Textile

# DAN ELSWORTH

*It goes to show how important understanding the context fully is but without proper investigation at the time of discovery that is difficult after the event. [However], it is still potentially useful in terms of understanding how dynamic some of the deposits [on the Duddon foreshore] are and how material can be reworked and appear deeper and more buried than it perhaps is, which would be beneficial if it was possible to do more detailed research on the footprints as a whole.*

# FURTHER ANALYSIS?

- Another 9 strands
- Hazel nut shells
- Cost prohibitive

**WOOD**

21-22 January 2017

January 2017  
Saturday 21

07:00 WHILE OUT WALKING  
09:00 NEAR HOD BARROW POINT  
11:00 I SAW A PIECE OF  
13:00 WOOD RAISED OUT OF THE  
15:00 SAND STARTED SCRAPPING  
17:00

~~THE~~ SAND AWAY Sunday 22  
(22-343)

IT WAS AROUND 14-18  
INCHES WIDE AND OVER  
10 FEET LONG GOING TO  
HAUL TO COME BACK  
TO MORROW AND HAVE  
A BETTER LOOK.

February

M	6	13	20	27
T	7	14	21	28
W	1	8	15	22
T	2	9	16	23
F	3	10	17	24
S	4	11	18	25
S	5	12	19	26

07:00  
08:00  
09:00  
10:00  
11:00  
12:00  
13:00  
14:00  
15:00  
16:00  
17:00

DAY 2 ON THE MYSTERY

PIECE OF WOOD.

AFTER ABOUT AN HOUR, I  
MANAGED TO UNCOVER

ABOUT 18 FT OF IT

STILL NOT SURE WHAT

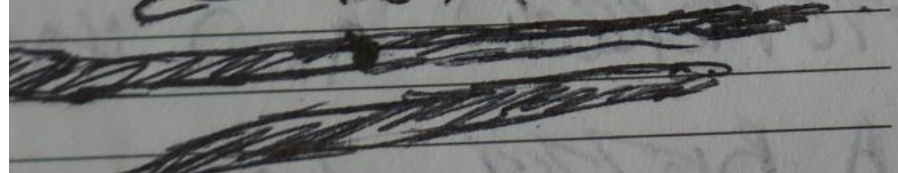
IT IS. THE MIDDLE

OF IT SEEMS TO BE

HOLLOWED OUT OR ROTTED

AWAY.

← 18 FT →



January					
M	2	9	16	23	30
T	3	10	17	24	31
W	4	11	18	25	.
T	5	12	19	26	.
F	6	13	20	27	.
S	7	14	21	28	.
S	8	15	22	29	.

1877

~~Handwritten scribbles covering several lines of text.~~









# PROFESSOR EDWARDS

- Originally from Millom – born and grew up here (not far from where I live in Devonshire Road)
- Moved to America
- Geography
- Comes back to the UK to visit family
- Has seen the wood and is considering having it radio-carbon dated
- Linked with a university in the States.
- Back in June, hoping to meet up with him and Dr Alison Burns

week 13

March 2017

Saturday 25

(84-281)

07:00 WHILE WALKING ABOUT

09:00 280 YARDS OFF THE

11:00 MAIN'S SHORELINE I

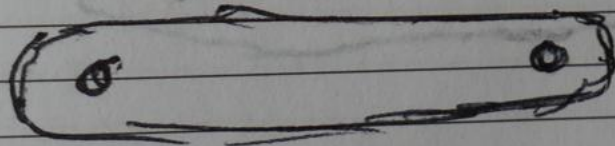
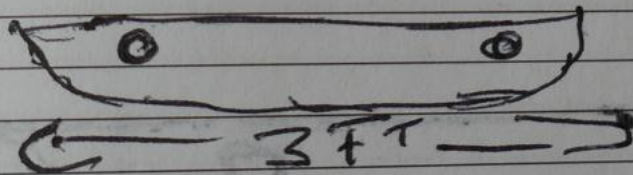
13:00 MANAGED TO FIND A

15:00 PIECE OF WOOD WHICH

17:00 COULD BE OFF THE

CONISTON SCHEWONER, Sunday 26

(85-280)



April



**OTHER WOOD**







# POSSIBLY MARLIN SPIKE TOOL (thanks Nigel)



**MONITORING**

# Monitoring Group

- **Who is interested? Give me name and contact details.**
- **Best way to communicate – Facebook?**
- **Need to meet and discuss best way to monitor**
- **Only when very high tide or storm**
- **Once identified then monitor for a week or two until gone**

# Few thoughts

- Make sure safe – NOT when tide is coming in
- Most likely appear after very high tide and storm
- Drone????
- Best time two hours after high tide
- Phone – photograph
- Ruler to put by print
- GPS position

**FUTURE?**

# Dr Sue Sallibrass

- *“Thank you very much for getting in touch, Jan. I hadn’t heard the sad news. Quite a shock.*
- *Duane & everybody else in the Millom group have been doing excellent work and I am very glad that you plan to create a tribute to Duane & to continue the project. The coastal footprints are so fragile and ephemeral, that it really takes a team of local volunteers to ‘catch them’ when they appear. They are such a tangible link to people moving about the local environment in the past.*
- *With very best wishes and sad (if belated) condolences.”*

# UNIVERSITIES?

- Need core samples and other samples to date footprints - university
- Contacted several: Manchester, Liverpool
- Professor from Bournemouth
- Professor from USA

# OTHER PLACES?

- Going up coast - Bootle
- Other side of Duddon - Askam

# **BOOK SALES: £10**

- Need to replace money Society spent on radio-carbon dating, expert advice, printing: £1,979.62
- Less funding and donations (£886.96)
- £1,092.66

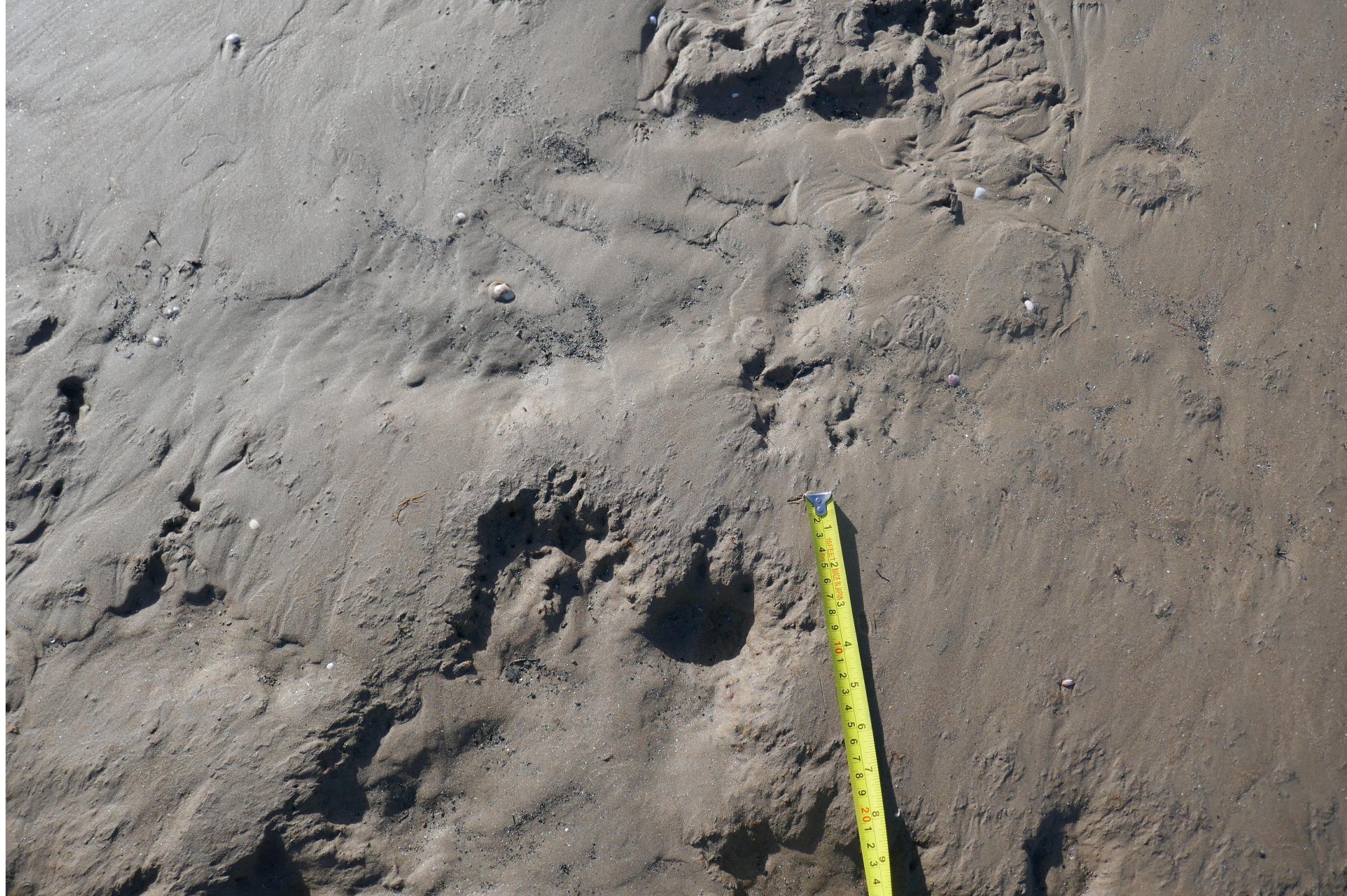
**AFTER STORM**

**DAVID**

**18 JANUARY 2026**











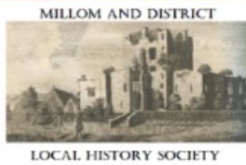
# TRAINING

- Applied for small amount of funding – will hear next month
- To pay for training from archaeologist
- What to look for
- How to record
- Specifically taking core samples
- If anyone over here interested will keep you posted!

# FUNDING

- Will need to acquire a more significant amount to pay for radio-carbon dating.
- Probably apply to CWAAS
- Hoping Professor Edwards might be able to help!

# www.millomhistory.org.uk



## Millom Footprints

"Millom Footprints" refers to prehistoric human footprints preserved in the coastal clays of the Duddon Estuary near the Mains, Millom, Cumbria.

For many years, locals in Millom have been aware of footprints in the clay near Millom Mains but it was only in 2017 that local historian, Duane Farren, identified them as ancient footprints.

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# FURTHER RESEARCH (OTHER PERIODS)

- MILLOM CASTLE, THE HUDDLESTONS AND THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR – Autumn?
- FOUND A WONDERFUL ARTICLE BY A VICTORIAN ANTIQUARIAN FROM BARROW ABOUT FURNESS DURING THE CIVIL WAR – PUBLISH?

Q.A.