

# Dig uncovers further evidence of cemetery

## Second excavation finds three sets of human remains

BY STEVE BARTON

newsdesk@suffolkfreepress.co.uk  
@SFPSSudbury

**A second archaeological dig in four months at Clare Castle Country Park has found conclusive evidence of a Christian cemetery.**

Three sets of human remains – a complete skeleton, another skeleton without a head and with an arm lying just a few inches away and a set of bones – were all found in a single trench dug where the railway station used to be.

The five-day dig was part of the Managing a Masterpiece Project, which aims to discover more about the history of the Stour Valley. It involved archaeologists from Access Cambridge Archaeology, Managing a Masterpiece and 21 volunteers.

A previous dig at the end of May unearthed two sets of human remains, a dis-



**DISCOVERY: One of the three sets of human remains uncovered.**

covery that offered the first evidence of a Christian cemetery.

Following that dig, further funding was provided to return and discover the extent of the cemetery, findings that were explained by the team's leader, Dr Carenza Lewis.

She said: "There has been long-standing rumours of human remains coming from around Clare Castle and it's the first time we've been able to give them some

dates."

The way the skeletons were laid out with no personal belongings indicated they were Christian burials.

The unearthing of Thetfordware pottery – made between 850AD and 1100AD – enabled archaeologists to accurately date what they had found.

Dr Lewis said: "The aim of this dig was to put in a trench a little bit away from the last one to see if there was a more extensive grave-

yard here and if there were any buildings associated with it.

"If you have a graveyard, you should have a church."

Although no church was found, what was revealed were the remains of a wall that cut through the graves – resulting in the head being knocked off a skeleton.

Evidence also suggests a rubbish pit was dug between two of the graves and is likely to have severed the arm from the skeleton.

Dr Lewis said: "It's been hugely successful because we've got three skeletons, all laid out east to west and they are eight to 10 metres from the skeletons we've previously found."

The land may have been owned by an Anglo-Saxon lord and given to a Norman lord who built a new hall on top of the burial site.

☐ To see a video of Dr Lewis talking about the dig, go to [www.suffolkfreepress.co.uk](http://www.suffolkfreepress.co.uk).