

Museum's Egyptology collections.

The tests have revealed some fascinating information, especially about one particular Egyptian vase. Experts used to think that the vase, decorated with an unusual burial scene, was a fake, as it was "too good to be true". However, recent archaeological tests, run at York University, have revealed the vase to be from a very early Egyptian burial dating back over 5,000 year to the Predynastic era (c.3200 BC). This makes the vase older than the Pyramids!

The decoration on the vase shows a figure on a boat, lying on its back and curled in the foetal position. This is how some early Egyptians may have been buried before mummification was introduced. Experts consider the vase may be one of the earliest depictions of an Egyptian burial on a ceramic vessel in the world.

Ceryl Evans, Head of Museums and Arts for Harrogate District said "This is an exciting new discovery and highlights just how much modern science can teach us about the past".

The vase will be on show at the Royal Pump Room Museum in Harrogate from Friday 6th August 2004, as part of a small display of Harrogate's archaeological collections. The Royal Pump Room Museum is open Monday to Saturday 10am – 5pm, and Sundays 2-5pm.

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For further details or a photo opportunity please contact: Ros Watson, Curator of Human History on (01423) 556188. Images of the vase are available via e-mail.

Harrogate Museums and Arts holds a small but important Egyptian archaeological collection including a complete mummy sarcophagus, statues and stone carvings, jewellery and burial offerings.

The artefacts were excavated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when they were acquired by a local collector, Mr. Kent, and were later bequeathed to Harrogate Museums service in 1968.

Harrogate Museums and Arts is part of the Department of Leisure and Amenity Services,
Harrogate Borough Council