

NMA excavation Saffieni

Comments made in a personal communication by Dr. David Higgins, Department of Archaeology, University of Liverpool, L69 3BX, UK.

Saffieni. Material from the backfill of a 1909 excavation at the prehistoric hypogeum, excavated by Nathaniel Cutajar, August 1991. There is a photograph of the earlier workforce in which some of the men are actually smoking.

Figure 1. Item 18, context 17. Fragment of bowl in white pipeclay. Bore at break 2mm. The bowl is decorated with a rouletted rim, bulls horns and the initials R(AOB).

Figure 2. Top: Item 15, context 17. Fragment of stem end in white pipeclay. Tapers 8mm-6mm, 2mm bore. Lower right: Item 15, context 17, fragment of stem which joins end fragment item 19, context 34, lower left.

"It is interesting to see the RAOB pipes from Malta. One might have thought that these would be confined to areas with RAOB Lodges - or perhaps there were some in Malta? Otherwise they must have been a popular design, widely available and not for a 'specialist' market. They are certainly common in early 20th century contexts in UK, which would tie in with the 1909 excavation backfill. They were widely produced and could have come from anywhere in England (I don't think they were much produced in Scotland)". The RAOB (Royal Antedeluvian Order of Buffaloes) were, and probably still are, a society who meet both for social enjoyment and mutual assistance. Very probably there would have been at least one Lodge in Malta during British times.



Figure 1
Saffieni 18/17

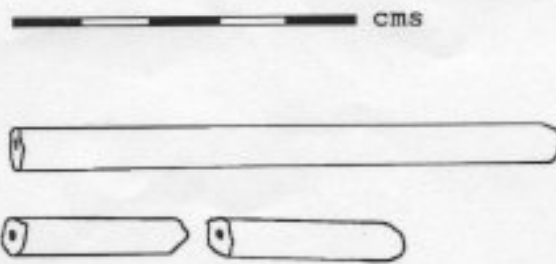


Figure 2 Saffieni 12/17, 15/17, 19/34.