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# The ARCHAEOLOGIST



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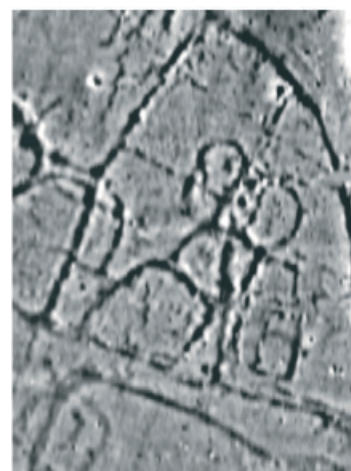


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Instruments

*Working with finds* is the theme of this issue of TA. The emphasis is on the vital contribution that everyone involved in finds work makes to archaeological knowledge, to running a professional archaeological service and to presenting the full glory of our discoveries to the outside world.

Inevitably, the problems surface first. These include the small number of young archaeologists choosing to become finds specialists (which some see as linked to lack of appreciation for work of this kind compared to macho management roles), shortage of funds for backroom conservation, the eternal issue of agreeing high standards that everyone both approves and is able to achieve, and how can we best deliver our final product – an elegant, digestible and fully comprehensive publication with finds reports in a suitably starring role.

These problems are fairly faced in this special issue, which has been largely compiled by IFA's energetic special interest Finds Group. Ideas were generated and exchanged by the committee, headed and galvanised by their Chair, Duncan Brown, and contributors were then coerced (nicely) by their Secretary, Nicola Powell. Your Editor was delighted to have so many significant case studies (taking us from prehistoric rock art to twentieth-century toys), which provide useful lessons for other archaeologists, and also to be able to voice the obvious frustrations of many experts. At the same time, it's good to hear the open enthusiasm of finds workers, whether they are sorting material in the finds shed, project managing massive new displays, conserving fragile treasures or achieving good storage conditions for the whole archive in perpetuity. Above all, we hope that everyone gets the message that Nicola Powell and Annette Hancocks proclaim (p8) – finds workers are archaeologists too!

Also covered in this TA is the current Heritage Protection Review, which is likely to affect the



Nicola Powell examining an object

working practices of many archaeologists. IFA is lobbying to get improvements to planning guidance, so that Cinderella issues such as outreach, conservation, archiving and storage of finds, and better publication, achieve recognition. We hope that a good enough case will have been made for Government action. We will keep you in touch with developments expected in 2006.

IFA is also pleased to introduce two new members of staff. Kathryn Whittington has replaced Sonya Nevin as Administrative Assistant, and Tim Howard has joined for one year as a Recruitment and Marketing Manager. Meanwhile, your Editor has reduced her hours, giving up outreach work to concentrate on editing issues.

Alison Taylor  
Alison.Taylor@archaeologists.net

## Notes to contributors

### Themes and deadlines

Winter: Environmental archaeology  
deadline: **15 December 2005**

Spring: Medieval Britain  
deadline: **15 March 2006**

**Contributions and letter/emails** are always welcome. Short articles (max 1000 words) are preferred. They should be sent as an email attachment, which must include captions and credits for illustrations. The editor will edit and shorten if necessary. Illustrations are very important. These can be supplied as originals, on CD or as emails, at a minimum resolution of 500kb. More detailed *Notes for contributors* for each issue are available from the editor. Opinions expressed in *The Archaeologist* are those of contributors, not necessarily those of IFA.

EDITED by Alison Taylor, IFA, SHES, University of Reading, Whitenights, PO Box 227 READING RG6 6AB

DESIGNED and TYPESET by Sue Cawood

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## From the Chair

### Michael Dawson



Michael Dawson

Today the IFA is facing a period of unprecedented challenge in areas of professional practice, in the political environment, with other stakeholder groups, and with respect to each other. In particular the Heritage Protection Review in England and the forthcoming PPS on planning and archaeology, the rise of APPAG, and debate on the Valletta convention will usher in changes that will affect the way we practise our profession and the development of the IFA itself.

There is no doubt that archaeologists today operate in a more complex arena than ever before, one in which heritage can be seen as an economic tool in urban regeneration and tourism and as an impediment in some areas of development and minerals planning. Our relationship with the community is no longer mediated by our own enthusiasm but represented by a multiplicity of television and film images, and as a profession we are learning to develop the skills of lobbying and public debate. But what we have yet to attain is better communication amongst ourselves and with others.

Often when professional organisations face the challenge of the unknown the first response is introspection. What has the IFA done for me? When the IFA set out one of the earliest responses was to propose an alternative organisation. Less than a month ago in a recent discussion on increasing the IFA recommended pay scales that same instinct re-emerged. Why are we still revisiting the same issue? Does this mean we're still debating the validity of the IFA? The IFA counts amongst its members teachers, planners, consultants, contractors, environmentalists. Surveyors, inspectors of ancient monuments, geophysicists, development control officers, museum staff, finds specialists, conservators and many more make up our constituency.

In just twenty years IFA has shaped professional practice, it has represented the profession to national and local government, codified professional practice, led the way in developing occupational standards and training in archaeology, provided a forum for scholarly debate, and brought archaeologist together with all our stakeholder groups. The Institute operates nationwide in

Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and England. It is broad based and inclusive, with over 2000 members, *we* represent the professional face of British archaeology. In two decades it has grown in stature and confidence. Our Standards are the bedrock of the profession; the RAO scheme the touchstone of best practice, and our annual conference a public and professional arena for debate and experimentation.

And yet the Institute is poised to do much better. It advances the practice of archaeology and allied disciplines, promotes professional standards and ethics for conserving, managing, understanding and enjoying the heritage. *Membership demonstrates professional standing, a commitment to professionalism and standards in archaeology. It shows commitment to maintaining and improving quality and integrity. What better advertisement could there be to the outside world? And what firmer platform for the advancement of our profession?*

During next year the Institute will continue to set standards in archaeology, represent the profession in the UK and the rest of Europe, work towards better conditions for its members, and to streamline validation. It will continue to support professional publication and special interest groups, and to provide a wide range of membership services. It will continue to work on accreditation under the Valletta Convention. To do this comprehensively we need to take our message out there, to students, to allied professions, to those archaeologists who have not recognised that improving our profession lies in effective representation.

- the larger the proportion of the profession in the IFA the more representative the Institute.
- the larger the Institute the firmer our advice.
- the stronger the Institute the greater the opportunity for individual members to put their view where it matters.
- the more confident our advice the better the chance that we shall be listened too.

Representation is only one step, however. Over the coming months we will continue to work towards recognition as the profession gains stature, and *(continued on page 43)*

# FROM THE FINDS TRAY

## Cauldrons in Taunton

A nationally important collection of 179 bronze cooking vessels, including cauldrons, skillets and posnets, has been acquired by Somerset County Museums with grant aid from HLF and the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund. Cast vessel body sherds and pot legs are common finds from archaeological contexts, but here you can see the complete objects, which often include touching inscriptions such as 'WIL THIS PLES YOY' on the handles. There will be a permanent display at the County Museum in Taunton from March 2006 and Roderick Butler and Chris Green have written an accompanying booklet.



Skillet made by James Reeve, mid 17th century.  
© Somerset County Museums

## Construction Skills Certification Scheme update

The Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) provides proof of competence for construction workers and related occupations. It is also used as proof of health and safety awareness as cardholders are required to pass an appropriate health and safety test. CSCS cards may be a requirement of entry onto some construction sites. Certification may be achieved through benchmarking qualifications with NVQs or SVQs at level 2 and above or by a professional membership route. Previously, occupations without access to benchmarked qualifications, such as archaeology, have been covered by a letter of non-availability, but from 1 August 2005 these letters have been replaced by a Construction Related Occupation card. CRO cards are issued under the scheme rules of Industry Accreditation, meaning that an applicant's employer will be asked to certificate competence. Applicants will also need to pass the relevant CITB-Construction Skills Health and Safety Test. The cost of the new card is £20 and it is valid for 5 years.

The new card carries details of the holder's occupation. Archaeology falls in the Manager/Supervisor category of occupations which is currently under review and we are advised that application forms will not be issued for 2-3 weeks. RAOs experiencing problems gaining access to construction sites without the CRO card can contact the CSCS helpdesk on 0870 4178777 for further advice. IFA is investigating including IFA membership in the professional membership route to certification. We will let you know when we get more information.

## Brick and tile day

Unfortunately, by the time you read this, the IFA Finds Group Brick and Tile Recording Day held at the Yorkshire Museum in York in November will have come and gone. These handling sessions, combined with seminars held earlier in the year, have proved very popular and places filled up quickly after a mention in *From the Finds Tray* in TA 56. The nature of some of the practical sessions means space is necessarily limited. However, it is always possible to repeat an oversubscribed session so do please let the Finds Group committee know you're interested – or if you have special requests for future events.

Contact Nicola Powell, npowell@museumoflondon.org.uk.

## New Illustration and Survey Group and contract

IFA Council has just approved formation of a new group, the Illustration and Survey Special Interest Group (ISSIG). This will focus on illustration and survey within the IFA, promote high standards and encourage CPD amongst illustrators and surveyors. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding between IFA and the Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors (AAI&S; see TA 50, p6), the group will be a contact point between our two bodies. AAI&S and ISSIG have already launched *Terms & conditions for the commissioning of illustration work from freelance operatives* (which can be downloaded from their website at [www.aais.org.uk/html/members.asp](http://www.aais.org.uk/html/members.asp), AAI&S Artists Acceptance of Terms document). The aim is to provide a clear contract that both protects the interests of the illustrator and takes account of the client's needs. The terms are offered as a model for illustrators to use or modify (taking legal advice as necessary) as they wish.

To join ISSIG contact Margaret Matthews ([m.matthews@reading.ac.uk](mailto:m.matthews@reading.ac.uk)) or Jo Bacon ([jkbacon@btinternet.com](mailto:jkbacon@btinternet.com)).



Recording tiles © MoLAS

## Infection risks from human remains

Guidance, incorporating comments by IFA, has now been issued by the Health and Safety Executive and can be downloaded from the HSE website at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/funeraldoc.pdf>.

## IFA AGM seminar: Protect and survive – preparing for changes in how we identify and manage the heritage

Peter Hinton

a way of promoting a sense of identity and place and a catalyst for social, economic and cultural regeneration

- we need a system that is publicly accountable, brings transparency to owners, but emphasises that they have a 'duty of care'
- we need to decide the status of assets on local registers – recognising that for communities the local is no less important than the national
- the need for statutory HERs is demonstrated by one delinquent Scottish authority; and a register is useless without an historic environment service to support, interpret and use it
- English management agreements, similar to measures for protecting the natural environment, provide excellent potential for intelligent conservation but will not apply in all cases – especially for owners with no interest in protecting the historic environment
- integration of buried and above-ground historic environment is welcome, reflecting the development of our professions and the strengthening relationship between IFA and IHBC – but ecclesiastical and maritime dimensions should not be forgotten and the status of conservation areas must be properly integrated
- there are major resourcing issues for local authorities to act as the 'gateway' to the reformed English system: numbers may be financed by the Treasury from savings in the planning system, but funds for training to supplement that being pioneered by English Heritage have yet to be identified
- drafting of primary legislation will have to be excellent not to repeat or enlarge the loopholes of the present system, and must take advice from experienced practitioners from the 'sharp end'

The meeting recognised that the English reforms depend on a broad base of political support from the profession using public benefit arguments. Only in this way will they retain the all-important support of ODPM and DEFRA: DCMS is not influential enough alone to persuade the Treasury and the government's business managers that the enterprise merits the investment or parliamentary time. As far as the IFA audience reactions can be gauged, the verdict was 'nervous enthusiasm' – the principles have our support, but there are plenty of devils in the details. The IFA is committed to playing its part in driving out the devils, and made the case for greater involvement in discussions. Lack of an archaeological voice on HEACS was noted again: let us hope that this 'oversight' is rapidly corrected.

This reference to Cold War civil defence did not suggest that reforms of heritage legislation would unleash a nuclear holocaust, but the indisputable fact that the proposals for England will change fundamentally the way in which archaeologists and other historic environment professionals work. We will need to adapt. The unified list of heritage assets will change the legislative and conservation framework, and will herald statutory HERs; delegated, integrated consents will change many jobs; and the potential to use management agreements as an alternative to the consent regime will change ways we interact with stakeholders.

Peter Beacham, English Heritage's director of heritage protection, outlined the new proposals and how far negotiations had come (see *Salon-IFA* 125 and [www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.8380](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.8380)). Andrew Wright, chair of the legislation working group of the Historic Environment Advisory Council for Scotland (HEACS), reported on the working groups evolving opinions, and hinted strongly that the HEACS report to Scottish Ministers may well argue for reforms just as far-reaching.

The presentation and debate that followed brought a number of points

- the present system is confusing, has many overlaps and inadequacies, is secretive, and encourages the view that heritage is a brake on progress and economic development rather than

## European Association of Archaeologists in **Cork** 2005



EAA delegates  
gather round  
Drombeg stone  
circle, Co.Cork.  
Photograph Alison  
Taylor

Nearly 800 archaeologists, mostly from Europe but some from further away, met in Cork, Ireland, 5-11 September to enjoy EAA's peripatetic annual conference. The numerous social events were a triumph of Irish hospitality, and there were about 60 lecture sessions (7 to 15 talks each) and round tables, ranging from remote sensing to skull modification. New academic research mingled with professional issues, all seeming much more fresh with an international slant. Your Editor's favourites included a day of Scandinavians looking at the latest discoveries on prehistoric funerary rites (ie up to about AD1000) in their area, and *Deviant burial practices*, where pictures of wounds inflicted on the latest Irish bog bodies stole the show.

Many sessions covered issues of immediate importance to archaeological project managers and other professionals. One over-crowded room reviewed current approaches to archaeological quality management in Ireland, Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, France and the UK (including presentations by Willem Willems MIFA and Peter Hinton, IFA Director). As ever the balance between state regulation and self-regulation was markedly different between North-Western and Mediterranean Europe, and as ever only the trans-Atlantic 'Europeans' comprehended why excavation

licences do not fit in the Great British tradition, being an adjunct to either state or self-regulation everywhere else in Europe, including all of Ireland. Delegates discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches – and the UK contingent came away with clearer ideas on how IFA, IHBC, the national heritage bodies and planning authorities should cooperate to improve and strengthen the present system.

Elsewhere Gerry Wait MIFA and Diane Scherzler of German media company Südwestrundfunk led a training session to guide archaeologists on their dealings with newspaper, radio and TV journalists, with many useful tips on how to stay in control of the interview.

Trips included early medieval Kerry and prehistoric Cork, led by John Sheehan (University College Cork) and William O'Brian (University College Galway). Highlights were Bronze Age copper mines of Mt Gabriel and sixth to twelfth-century religious buildings and inscribed crosses on the lake isle of Church Island.

Next year's conference will be in Cracow (see <http://www.e-a-a.org>) and this too is highly recommended.

# Finds workers are archaeologists too!

## The work of IFA's Finds Group

Annette Hancocks and Nicola Powell

IFA Finds Group first met in November 1989, with the remit of representing the interest of finds workers to IFA Council and advising Council on finds related issues. This work has been increasing in recent years. It has included completion of the *Standards and guidance for finds work*, the National Monuments Review, commenting on guidance on *Standards for recording human remains* and, most recently, guidelines for a contract for specialist archaeological work, to name but a few.

which allowed the group to respond on the consultation paper on the treasure act review. Other sessions have included a human bone workshop on the law and burial archaeology, a seminar on sampling strategies and a discussion that looked towards a technical paper for finds work. Working with other groups, including Maritime Affairs, we've looked at finds from a marine context and posed the question 'whose find is it anyway?' In 2004, the metal and metalwork handling session at the British Museum was oversubscribed and we hope to hold more of these as the demand persists. The 2005 programme was dedicated to building materials and again the practical session in York has quickly filled.

The 2006 theme will be glass. But what then? Another questionnaire will be soliciting your thoughts as to what training needs you have or might supply.

Sadly, in the cut and thrust world of developer-funded archaeology, it can easily be forgotten that finds workers are archaeologists too. This can go as far as specialists not seeking IFA membership, as they cannot see how they fit in or how to express their experience on the application form. Again, the Finds Group can help and encourage them to blow their own trumpets. After all, an artefact is an archaeological project in its own right – and finds specialists are certainly archaeologists too!

If you are interested in joining IFA's Finds Group (free for all IFA members) contact the Secretary [npowell@museumoflondon.org.uk](mailto:npowell@museumoflondon.org.uk), 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London NI 7ED.

Nicola Powell  
Hon Secretary, IFA Finds Group

Annette Hancocks  
IFA Finds Group



We are also concerned about training the next generation, and so launched a training questionnaire in 2001. There was a 20% response, from which the committee designed and delivered a combination of seminar-based learning followed by hands-on practical experience. So far, these have included *Science and Finds*, May 2001 and the *Portable Antiquities Scheme*, September 2001,

Finds workers are archaeologists too – Museum of London Specialist Services providing expert care for an Anglo-Saxon silver spoon from Prittlewell. © Museum of London Archaeology Service

# Training the next generation of finds specialists

Kate Geary

## Where is the next generation of finds specialists to come from?

This is being asked more and more and is becoming increasingly difficult to answer. The archaeological labour market intelligence report (Aitchison, K & Edwards, R 2003 *Archaeology Labour Market Intelligence: profiling the profession 2002-03*), indicated a high incidence of skills shortages in artefact conservation and artefact research, signifying a lack of in-house finds experience and a reliance on a dwindling number of external specialists. Anecdotal evidence supports these findings; the difficulties of finding appropriate specialists, lack of training opportunities and even a lack of interest in finds work are regularly reported.

Where should we look for solutions? Finding a way to fund the considerable investment of time required to train potential successors is a challenge. Developing an interest and basic knowledge of finds early in an archaeologist's career is important and at this level things look a little brighter. Several archaeological practices carry out basic training in identification and processing in-house. Wessex Archaeology runs a regular Pottery Seminar for field-based staff, concentrating on recognition of fabric, form and manufacture. Birmingham Archaeology contributes a module on finds analysis to Birmingham University's MA in Practical Archaeology. Linked to the appropriate National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Archaeological Practice, it includes finds processing, basic conservation and report writing, as well as looking at specific finds types in detail. This is particularly valuable, as lack of knowledge of finds work at graduate level is a common complaint.

English Heritage runs on-site traineeships in finds and environmental archaeology and, funding

permitting, will provide further training internships. IFA Finds Group organises seminars and training workshops. In the future, we will work with the Finds Group to promote their events as opportunities for CPD, linked to NOS. The Portable Antiquities Scheme runs its own in-house training opportunities for Finds Liaison Officers, and many period- or artefact-specific research and study groups organise meetings, conferences and finds handling opportunities.

We still need more training opportunities. As well as working with other bodies, IFA's bid to the HLF for workplace learning bursaries includes finds training placements with English Heritage, Worcestershire County Council and York Archaeological Trust. If the bid is successful, training plans for each placement will be available on the web, for use by other organisations. Placements are still sought for the scheme, and interested organisations, particularly those able to offer finds training, should get in touch.

IFA also works with other organisations to identify skills gaps and to target training opportunities. Perhaps we can do more to co-ordinate opportunities and identify sources of funding. Linking existing and future training opportunities with NOS for Archaeological Practice will help ensure consistency and will enable knowledge to be accredited towards future vocational qualifications. NOS can be viewed at [www.chnto.co.uk/development/nos.html](http://www.chnto.co.uk/development/nos.html) and we are happy to provide advice on their use.

As always, feedback is useful and we would like to hear about your experience of finds training, good and bad. Similarly, if you are a finds specialist and have any thoughts about future priorities, please do get in touch.

Kate Geary  
IFA Training & Standards Co-ordinator  
[Kate.Geary@archaeologists.net](mailto:Kate.Geary@archaeologists.net)

## Contract for undertaking finds specialist archaeological work: draft proposals

### IFA Finds Group

A number of finds and environmental specialists work as sole traders and are subcontracted to undertake work by a variety of different organisations ('clients'). So that both the specialist and the client are sure of what is expected, IFA Finds Group has put together points that should be considered. These points will be developed into a model contract which is intended to be compatible with the new AAI&S contract –

The recent development of model contracts for archaeologists began with the Institution of Civil Engineers' *Conditions of contract for archaeological investigation*, prepared by the ICE, two other engineering institutes and IFA (see TA 54); and continued with the acceptance/licence form for archaeological artwork to be published by the Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors and IFA's newly formed Illustration and Survey Special Interest Group (see p5).

When commissioning work from a finds specialist, charge out rates will reflect both labour costs and overheads. Work should be carried out in accordance with IFA *Standards and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*, IFA Guidelines for finds work, and refer to standards promoted by relevant specialist groups and research frameworks.

The client should issue a brief, then agree a specification and estimate on that brief provided by the specialist. Once agreed, the contract will be issued and signed. Items not mentioned may be undertaken for an additional charge, all changes to be agreed in writing. No work will be undertaken until the quote has been accepted and a formal commission received.

- 1 Health and Safety – The specialist if working on site will expect to be covered by the client's health and safety obligations
- 2 the specialist retains copyright as author of the report, with full acknowledgements of the role of the client. However, licence should be granted to the client for full use, publication and dissemination of all data collected, and the report, so long as the proper acknowledgements are made. Conversely the specialist would acknowledge the role of the client in any future use of the data
- 3 payment should be issued within 30 days of receipt of invoice, or interest will be charged at 10% over basic rate
- 4 the estimate is valid for a set period: 6 months or 31 March, whichever is nearest
- 5 estimates do not include costs for expenses such as transport, P&P, illustration, proof reading, editing, specialist conservation or equipment, unless explicitly agreed
- 6 completion of the final report is dependent upon the specialist receiving full supporting data as specified by the IFA *Standards and guidance*
- 7 removal: if finds are not removed from the specialist's place of work within 30 days of receiving the invoice a storage charge will be levied
- 8 inclusion of unsorted material after acceptance of initial material will be covered by a separate estimate
- 9 all work will be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standards and guidance*

The Finds Group welcomes comments on these proposals from any interested parties. Please contact the Secretary of the Finds Group, npowell@museumoflondon.org.uk.

## Everybody's got to have standards –

*haven't they?*

Duncan Brown

*In* 2003 the Archaeological Archives Forum published *A Review of Standards in England for the creation, preparation and deposition of archaeological archives* (<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/archives>). The aims were to provide an overview of existing standards, to identify areas where no common standards exist or where they are inconsistent, and to make proposals to rectify this. We also wanted to understand how the archive process is managed by considering the roles of different organisations and the relationships between them, and to establish the feasibility of producing national standards.

This process has thrown light on the inconsistencies that bedevil this most fundamental of our archaeological duties. To start with, not all of us even recognise that a stable, ordered, accessible archive is a prime responsibility. Project designs/briefs do not always make this a necessity, contractors' manuals do not always recognise the long-term issues that should affect their methodologies, consultants don't accept that they might influence the archive creation process, specialists operate in a vacuum, and different museums offer a dismaying variety of deposition standards. We are, meanwhile, in danger of being overwhelmed by the fastest growing archive issue – digital material.

This is not healthy, and the next step for AAF is to commission a National Standard for the Creation, Preparation and Deposition of Archaeological

Archives. This will set out the principles that underpin every aspect of the archaeological process that relate to archive creation, and how all archaeological practitioners can follow them. The first step must be to recognise that every record must be accessible to future users. We therefore need to agree common terminologies, establish methods for classification and quantification, adopt the same techniques for labelling and organisation and above all accept that we all have responsibility for ensuring that the archaeology we practice properly deserves the term 'preservation through record'.

This will not be an ultra-detailed, draconian, laying down of the law. Preparation will bring together existing national and local standards to present a distillation of current practice and recommendations. There will also be consultation with representative bodies, such as IFA, ALGAO, ADS and specialist groups. Funding is being sought principally from EH, but partnerships with the relevant bodies in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are being explored. What we hope to produce is something equally useful in the site hut, the office and the museum, and that will enable us all to reduce the current inconsistencies within the archive process.

Duncan H Brown  
Chair, IFA Finds Group  
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# ARCHAEOLOGISTS, ARCHIVES and OUR FUTURE Future

Hedley Swain

The problem with most archaeologists, and therefore by definition IFA conferences, is that we stay in our comfort zones. Road archaeologists go to sessions about roads and reassure each other that they are doing good roads archaeology; planning archaeologists go to sessions on HERs and pat each other on the back, and so on. The same has been the case for museum archaeologists. Anecdotally the whole profession agrees that there is a problem with the way we create and curate archaeological archives but it is the museum archaeologists who organise sessions on archives and who come along to them. The idea of the archive session at this year's conference, organised by Duncan Brown for the IFA Finds Group and the Archaeological Archives Forum, was to move the archives debate forward by involving all sectors of the archaeological community.

In past years Pete Hinton had famously referred to archives being perceived as equivalent to low-level nuclear waste, and in a past article I had made an analogy with WMD (lots of people talk about them but they are quite hard to find). At this session there was talk of 'special needs' and 'orphans'. This is far more touchy-feely, who knows we may eventually get to love these products of our endeavours.

The session included practitioners from across the profession, with Duncan Brown and Nicola Powell speaking from the museum perspective, Ken Smith from ALGAO, Mick Rawlings as a contractor, and Malcolm Atkin as a heritage manager. In addition Catherine Hardman gave the view from ADS, and Elizabeth Walker and Hillary Malaws described initiatives in Wales where a more joined-up approach to archaeology is setting an example.

There was agreement that all parts of the archaeological community should share responsibility for creating and caring for archives. If

we agree that archives are under-resourced and not properly integrated into cultural resource management processes, how do we correct this? Next year the Archaeological Archives Forum will publish sector-wide guidance on archive preparation and deposition (see Duncan Brown p11). It is also hoped that the new PPS, if it ever arrives, will include guidance on archive creation and deposition. Debates also continue about archaeological resource centres where the value of archives can be maximised. A major HEFCE funded project is also currently encouraging English universities to use archives in undergraduate teaching.

*Perhaps it is time to think about preservation by sample instead of by record; and to start doing archaeology with and for the public instead of managing the historic environment for ourselves?*

Nevertheless, there is still a need for a breakthrough in how we think about archives. We are still digging sites and recovering data based on a model developed in the 1970s, where it is assumed that the more is recovered and the more records we make the more truth will be revealed. Today most archaeologists accept that this is not the case. Equally I do not see any rise in new knowledge commensurate with the increase in recording and archiving. Perhaps it is time to think about preservation by sample instead of by record; and to start doing archaeology with and for the public instead of managing the historic environment for ourselves? Whatever the long-term solution the session kept the debate going, and kept moving it in the right direction.

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Perrin, K 2002 *Archaeological Archives: Documentation, Access and Deposition*. English Heritage

Swain, H 2004 'The Archaeological Archives Forum', *The Archaeologist*, 53, 31-2

## 'What Conservation can do for the Archaeologist and the Archaeologist can do for Conservation'

### SGIFA seminar

Gretel Evans

In 2003 the Scottish Group of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (SGIFA) presented a seminar with the aim of maximising information that can be garnered from artefacts by improving information exchange between conservators and archaeologists. This included: the practical care of artefacts from excavation to museum archive; information that can be retrieved from artefacts; presentation of the data and the site archive; future use and accessibility of the site archive; and artefacts within a museum setting.

Mandy Clydesdale, AOC Archaeology Group, followed the processing of artefacts and data from excavation to archiving, stressing the importance of information exchange. Gretel Evans, also from AOC Archaeology Group, concentrated on information that archaeologists can provide to conservators. First-aid for artefacts was discussed, with guidance on how to treat and pack finds on-site, when to call a conservator, and how to prioritise artefacts.

Fraser Hunter, National Museums of Scotland, stressed the value of on-site block lifting of vulnerable finds and suggested specialists should be integrated in the process from the planning stage, as should conservators, and Neil Curtis, Marischal Museum, discussed presentation of the site archive for the museum and its subsequent use.

It was felt that there was a general lack of basic understanding of first aid for finds by new graduates, and standards for treatment of artefacts throughout the archaeological world were variable. Although there are guidelines for treatment, storage and archiving of excavated material (IFA, UKIC, HS to mention a few) there is at present no way of enforcing such standards. Until such a mechanism is in place there will continue to be a disparity within the treatment and archiving of artefacts and the site archive.

NB Following this meeting, a series of seminars on first aid for finds is being organised regionally for AOC teams in 2006. There will be invitations for other archaeologists to attend, to gauge how much interest there is in this topic.

Gretel Evans  
AOC Archaeology



AOC conservators on site at Eweford. Crown copyright, courtesy of Historic Scotland





## Urning a living?

### A survey of the opinions and concerns of Roman pottery specialists

Andrew Peachey



Since it was founded in 1971 the Study Group for Roman Pottery (SGRP) has been concerned over the professional status, roles and training of Roman pottery specialists. These concerns were highlighted by the recent annual review of *Jobs in British archaeology (TA 56)* which demonstrated that the average income of specialists had plummeted to £15,254 after several years of fluctuating but generally positive progress. Prompted by this SGRP is conducting a survey of its members to gauge their professional status and opinions.

The aims are firstly to profile members anonymously, to assess the demographics of the Group, and then to canvas opinions on our future direction. It is the former that is of most concern here. The following comments are interim results and it is hoped that the full survey will be completed this year.

#### Current careers

Of the respondents, approximately 50% are involved in day-to-day recording and analysis of Roman pottery, with an even split between those who work for archaeological units and freelance. A further 25% are now involved in other post-excavation and project management roles, and 6% in academic research, several commenting that they are still irregularly involved in pottery research. Numerous unprompted comments relating to job position and job titles make it clear that, as in field archaeology, many are frustrated by the lack of structure and career development in all but the largest organisations. These concerns came both from those working as specialists and those hoping to.

#### Only the oldies?

The latter group is difficult to define – only one response has so far been received by a ‘digger’ with an interest in Roman pottery, though many have a good knowledge of Roman pottery, and do not envisage remaining as diggers forever. The survey has highlighted the lack of paths to become a ‘specialist’, most glaringly through the age ranges of those belonging to SGRP, ie the majority of the Roman pottery specialists. Less than 10% are under 40, 78% have been studying Roman pottery for over ten years and the most common reason cited for leaving SGRP in the next 3-5 years was retirement.

The vacuum between field and post-excavation roles is an issue that must be bridged if the discipline seeks to provide career development; an issue commendably kept prominent by IFA. This divide is, arguably, made worse by the increasing trend to ‘outsource’ work to freelance specialists, rather than maintain in-house expertise to train junior staff. Future initiatives have the potential to link closely with IFA, especially on training and standards. However, only 35% of specialists surveyed belong to IFA. Of those, the majority are at MIFA level, having been employed in a wide range of archaeological capacities in their careers. In the current environment wider opportunities are not so accessible to those in the early stages. There is potential, perhaps, for SGRP and other finds research groups to be working more closely with

IFA Finds Group to promote the views and concerns of their membership within IFA.

#### Better guidelines?

The need to set standards provides a common ground on which to base future initiatives to allow career development. Both IFA's *Standard & Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* and SGRP's *Guidelines for the archiving of Roman pottery* are fundamentally important documents, but both are static. There is a concern that more specific guidelines, such as those produced by SGRP, are not being referred to by curators and contractors faced with a multitude of specialist guidelines. As discussed by IFA Finds Group some years ago, there is a need for these to be collated and the key elements drawn out. One initiative under discussion, so far receiving 100% backing in the survey, is to provide mentoring. Group members, especially younger specialists, could seek guidance from more experienced members, perhaps submitting their reports for review. The initiative is still at an early stage and the logistics are unclear; 50% feel that such a service should be free-of-charge but this may be untenable.

This summary has highlighted the most striking concerns amongst our members. These may not be new or surprising, but when the survey is complete we should at least have some quantified data to support our case. We hope the survey will provide a foundation for further discussion and action. The final results and discussion will be available through SGRP.

*SGRP provides a forum for the discussion of all matters relating to Roman Pottery, and membership is open to all those with an interest (professional and amateur). For further information see [www.sgrp.org](http://www.sgrp.org).*

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‘There is potential, perhaps, for the SGRP and other finds research groups to be working more closely with IFA Finds Group to promote the views and concerns of their membership within the IFA’



Rock carvings dating back to the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age are found over most of Britain, with the greatest concentrations in northern England and Scotland. First recognised as ancient during the eighteenth century, this open-air, abstract tradition became the focus of study during the mid-nineteenth century, with the work of George Tate in Northumberland and Sir James Young Simpson in Scotland. These men developed databases by drawing up illustrated lists for their areas.

Intermittent studies meant that these databases were not substantially added to until the 1970s. In Scotland, modern systematic recording was initiated by Ronald Morris, whose publications cover Argyll and Galloway, while in Northumberland and adjacent counties this role has been played primarily by Stan Beckensall. In Yorkshire, the recording challenge was taken up by the Ilkley Archaeology Group, which has recently published some 650 carved rocks in the West Riding.

This work has been communicated primarily through papers and popular books and has underpinned British rock art research. Now the internet provides a powerful new tool. The University of Newcastle Beckensall Northumberland Rock Art project has created an interactive website

## British Rock Art databases *roll onto the Internet*

Geoff Bailey, Stan Beckensall, Chris Burgess, Glyn Goodrick, Aron Mazel, Sara Rushton and Clive Waddington

(<http://rockart.ncl.ac.uk>), with entries for each of the 1060 known panels in the county (containing locational, archaeological, environmental and management information), supported by browse and interactive search options.

Plans are underway to expand the Northumberland website through the English Heritage-funded Northumberland and Durham Rock Art Project (see Tertia Barnett, *TA 56*). Advances will include incorporation of panels from Durham and the creation of a web interface to allow data entry through the internet. The new project will lay the foundation for a website that can have data added from all over Britain – probably the first of its kind in the world.

Despite technological progress since Simpson and Tate, their goals of recording rock art, sharing information and developing understanding, continue to characterise British rock art studies. They would have viewed favourably these initiatives to make information so widely accessible.

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## Some contributions of conservation

Claire Heywood

Archaeological conservators are a multi-skilled part of the archaeological team who should be a fundamental part of any project specification within the tendering process. They combine archaeological knowledge with an understanding of physical and chemical stability and the practical skills to extract and preserve information inherent in finds.

Involvement of a conservator at an early stage saves money in the long-run and ensures that the project considers the long-term survival of artefacts. Many county archives will not accept objects unless they meet their defined 'minimum archival standards', including radiography, investigative cleaning, and stabilisation.

### Corrosion conserves

Knowledge of degradation processes can, for example, fill gaps in our understanding of organic objects and associated industries. In Britain, organic objects only survive as complete artefacts in waterlogged anoxic environments, but good standards of metal object excavation and investigative conservation can retrieve extra information. For example iron corrodes quickly in certain soils, capturing vital information about associated organic artefacts as casts or pseudomorphs within corrosion products. Investigative conservation reveals these details. Lead has a similar effect in certain environments, and corroding copper alloy and silver objects can act like a biocide, preserving organic material within surrounding soil. Therefore, metal finds should be excavated with their corrosion products and a layer of surrounding soil, so that information about associated finds and fittings can be investigated in laboratory conditions.

A block-lift results in vulnerable and/or high status finds/assemblages being complete, so that conservators with the right equipment and training can maximise the preservation of information. The process requires good communications between conservator and excavator, to ensure that priorities of both are met.

### Post-excavation

A conservator should assess artefact conservation requirements, and the cost implications of these and of research for publication should be considered



Assemblage prepared for block-lifting © British Museum

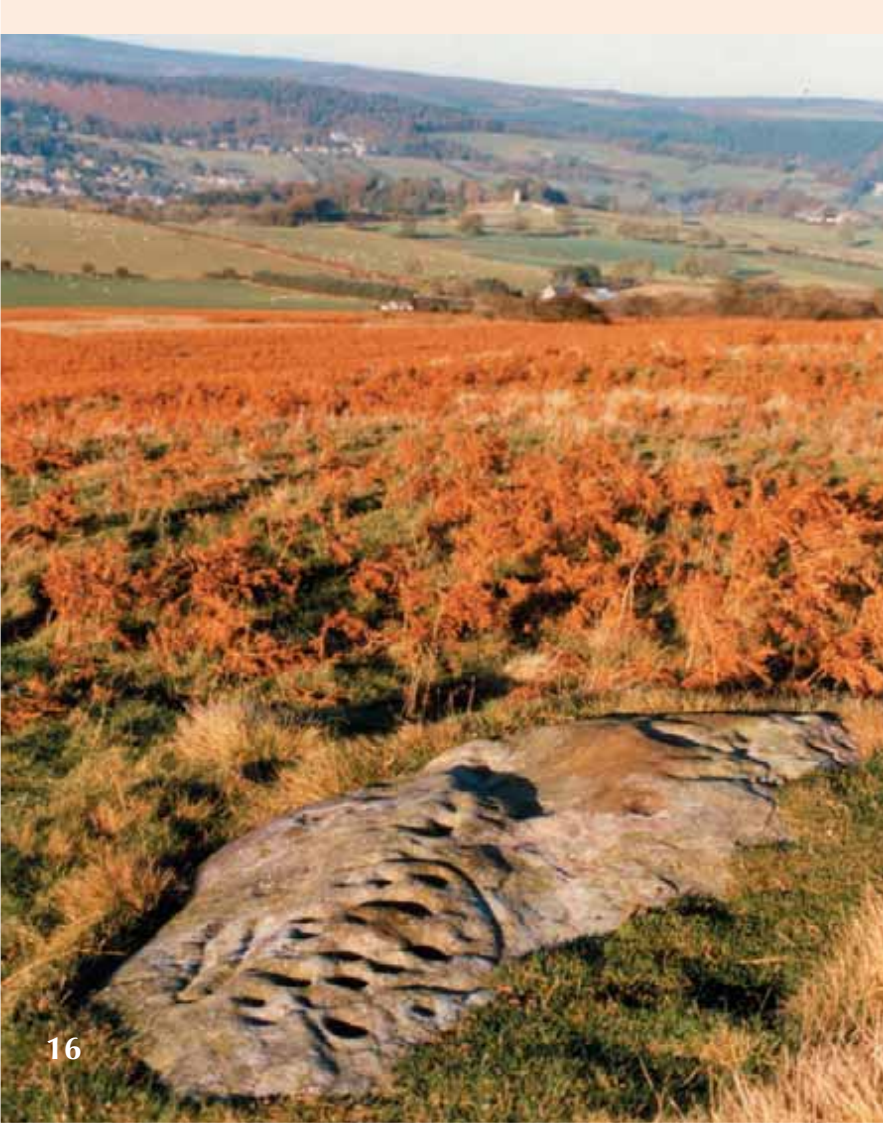


Block-lift inverted to reveal objects © British Museum



Copper alloy coin with textile attached © British Museum

View from the heavily decorated West Lordenshaw 1d (aka Horseshoe Rock) across the Coquetdale in central Northumberland. The village of Rothbury is in the background. Photograph Stan Beckensall





Close-up of glass string of beads revealed within the block © British Museum

prior to writing the initial brief. Preventative measures such as good packaging and storage environments will address many stability problems but some objects will require chemical treatments.

Minimum archive standards and/or the research questions for publication may mean that some objects will require investigative conservation. An object, as Gretel Evans (below) shows, is not necessarily what it initially appears. Many surfaces contain decorative and/or manufacturing information that will be captured by good radiography. Some objects

have an appearance that is confusing, for example a silver ring with hard, green surface can be mistaken for a copper alloy object. It will take time and skill to remove the corrosion without damaging the silver surface, to reveal the true nature of the object.

### Competition and best practice

Currently, UK archaeology exists in a competitive market with tight monetary constraints. The system relies on development control archaeologists ensuring that best standards are implemented and monitored or it becomes difficult for organisations with standards of 'best practice' to compete.

*Is the current situation due to the inadequacies of the tendering process and insufficient project monitoring or is there a genuine lack of interest amongst some in understanding and protecting our material culture?*

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www.ukic.org.uk/arch/ (for further information and suggested publications)  
www.instituteofconservation.org.uk (for further information)

## Interpreting finds from conservation

Gretel Evans

One aim when working with finds is to maximise information that can be realised from them. Throughout the conservation process, conservators look for clues about manufacture, use, life and purpose of an artefact. Artefacts can hold such information within corrosion layers, or be evidenced by creases, folds and wear marks for example; even the absence of such evidence will tell a tale.

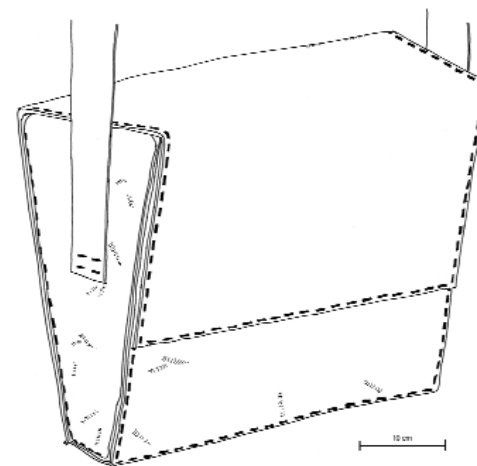
### Re-interpreting the Loch Glashan 'jerkin'

For example, a leather artefact excavated from Loch Glashan in the 1960s was recently reinterpreted through the conservation process (see Anne Crone & Ewan Campbell, *TA 52*). The 'leather jerkin' that had been mounted on a manikin for forty years was re-treated at AOC Archaeology Group's conservation laboratories and features such as wear-marks,



Loch Glashan 'Jerkin'

creases and stitch holes were examined by Rob Lewis. Eventually the artefact could be re-interpreted as a book satchel of the first millennium AD, one of the earliest examples of a satchel made to carry a bound codex.



Reconstruction of Loch Glashan satchel

### and an Iron Age burial

Another example is the case where Amanda Clydesdale was summoned, under the terms of the Historic Scotland Conservation Call Off Contract, to assist GUARD archaeologists remove artefacts from an Iron Age cist. This offered a wonderful opportunity for a forensic approach, allowing AOC to search the artefacts themselves for clues about the body, grave goods, and the form of the grave.

The stone-built cist contained an Iron Age warrior with a copper alloy pin, glass bead, two matching toe rings, copper alloy pin, spear and sword. Rings found on his chest and his back had traces of leather, probably from a complex leather baldric to secure his sword. There did not appear to have been

a scabbard for the sword, which had been placed on the man's chest. In the laboratory several interesting pieces of evidence emerged. Traces of textile were preserved on the underside of the copper alloy rings: it was made of linen, hand-woven to give a herring-bone (twill) effect. Several fine hairs were preserved on the very tip of the copper alloy pin, perhaps deriving from the fur trim of a garment it secured. The sword was shown to have two central grooves, a bone grip, and copper alloy pommel and guard. There was evidence from an x-ray that the blade may have had pattern-welding.

Conservation of the spear and the sword revealed aspects of the grave itself, for example that it was a burial chamber rather than a filled-in grave. The upper surface of the sword had no soil (nor any traces of a sheath, scabbard or covering) adhering to the corrosion layers, so it must have lain at the bottom of a cavity. The spear, found partly within the walls of the grave, had a strange formation of iron corrosion products on the socket. Vertical 'stalactites' of iron corrosion had formed, which could only have indicated that the metal was not in contact with the soil, and was suspended over a cavity.

These two examples illustrate that conservation is not simply about conserving artefacts but about contributing to understanding and interpretation. This is something that, as Claire Heywood has described, archaeologists should never ignore when designing research strategies.

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Spearhead, upper surface. Note wood from the shaft has survived in the socket – preserved by the biocidal effects of the metal corrosion. (Crown Copyright courtesy of Historic Scotland)



Spearhead from Alloa Iron Age cist, side view (Crown Copyright courtesy of Historic Scotland)

# Pitfalls and other traps...

Why it's worth looking at museum artefacts again

Alison Sheridan

Pictish stone from Grantown-on-Spey showing stag and probable tread trap. Photograph NMS



Re-examination of old finds can lead to significant gains in understanding past practices. Some of the recent work undertaken by the National Museums of Scotland is showcased here.

Recent work on the Loch Glashan codex satchel (p18) persuades us that, archaeologically speaking, silk purses *can* be made out of sows' ears. Re-examining old finds is a major aspect of research in the National Museums of Scotland Archaeology Department, and in TA 56 some results of the current radiocarbon dating programmes were highlighted. Here, we look at two particularly interesting items we have dated: one, a probable pitfall trap of Late Neolithic date from Mye Plantation, south-west Scotland, and a deer tread-trap of Early Historic date from a bog in Aberdeenshire.

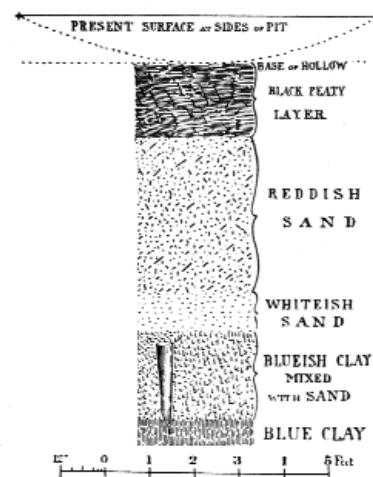
## The original pitfall trap

In 1995 we obtained an AMS date of 3913±39 BP (UB-3882, 2500–2230 cal BC at 2σ) from a waterlogged alder stake excavated by Roy Ritchie and Richard Atkinson at Mye Plantation in 1951. The stake had come from a linear series of pits first

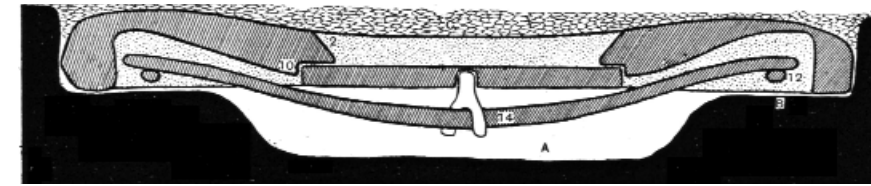
discovered and investigated in 1902, appearing as a row of five shallow oval depressions, unevenly spaced, close to the edge of a promontory around 15m above sea level, overlooking marshy ground around 800m from the modern coastline.

## Pit dwellings?

The eccentric archaeologist Ludovic Maclellan Mann excavated three pits, publishing his findings in Volume 37 of *PSAS* and concluding that they had been prehistoric pit dwellings. The largest was around 3 x 2.4 m at its top; Pit 5 was 2.84 m deep. Each contained numerous piles, their tops eroded. Those towards the centre had been driven in obliquely, forming an inverted cone, while the peripheral ones were vertical. Traces of wattlework (interpreted as a pit lining/wall), plus charcoal and worked stone, were found in Pits 5 and 3, with Late Neolithic pottery in Pit 3. Mann's experimental



Section and plan of base of Pit 1, from Mann 1903. Reproduced by courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland



Section of deer trap from Auquharney, from Graham-Smith 1923. Reproduced by courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

work, which featured chopping bars of soap with bronze and stone axe heads, concluded that the stakes had been cut using stone. The wood was birch, alder and hazel, used in a green state and driven into the ground against its line of growth to lengthen its use-life. Some of the pottery has features found on Scottish Impressed Ware, but at least one sherd is Grooved Ware, and bearing in mind the C14 date, an attribution of the whole assemblage to this tradition is provisionally proposed. The lithics include complete and fragmentary flint nodules, hammer- and anvil-stones, and cores, flakes and scrapers of flint.



Operation of tread trap, from Graham-Smith 1923. Reproduced by courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

## Catching large mammals...

Ritchie & Atkinson excavated a further pit and part of the area between the pits; their work remains unpublished except for an interim note. They found traces of a fence between two pits and further Late Neolithic pottery beneath the original upcast of Pit 2. Of greatest significance, however, were 'quite large stakes in the bottom of the pit with their upper ends pointed or sharpened', with brushwood on top (Ritchie pers comm, my emphasis). This, together with the fence, led them to conclude that here was a pitfall trap, designed to catch large mammals driven towards the end of the promontory. This remains the most plausible explanation, given the site's topography. The presence of artefacts and charcoal could be consistent with hunting-related activities, while the brushwood and wattlework could have been used to conceal the pits' entrance.

If this interpretation is correct, this represents a first for British Neolithic archaeology; and the proximity

(c 6km) to Neolithic sites around Dunragit, the focus of Julian Thomas' recent fieldwork, enhances its interest value even more.

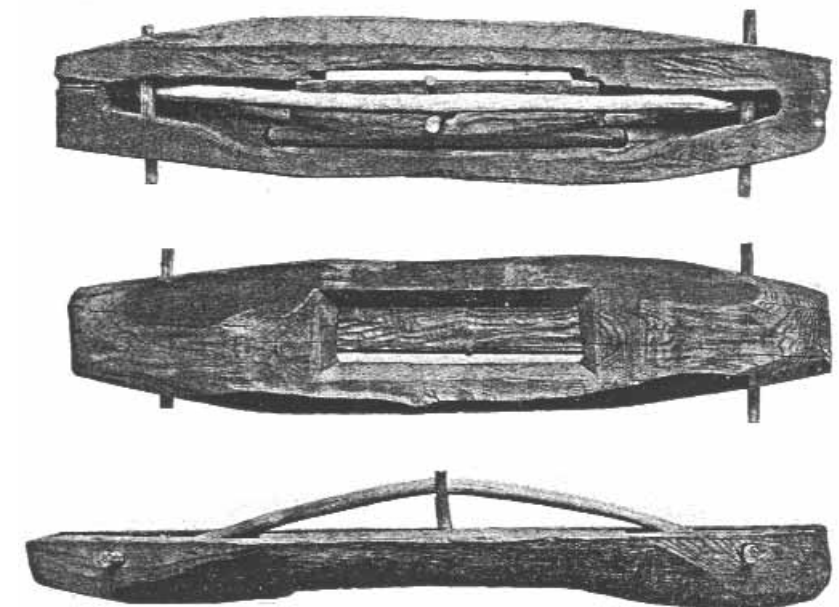
## ...especially deer

An alder deer tread-trap, found 3m deep in peat in 1921 at the Moss of Auquharney, Aberdeenshire, was AMS-dated in 1996 (on behalf of Marischal Museum) to 1440±45 BP (OxA-6052, cal AD 530–680 at 2σ). This type of trap – known also from Ireland, Wales and the Continent – was discussed by Graham-Smith in 1923 (*PSAS* Vol 57), and its use for deer-hunting explained. At least one such a trap is represented in use on a cross-shaft at Clonmacnoise in Ireland and another may be shown on a fine Pictish stone from Grantown-on-Spey. The radiocarbon date accords with estimated dates of the Grantown stone. At least one further trap of this kind has been radiocarbon dated to the same period in Ireland.

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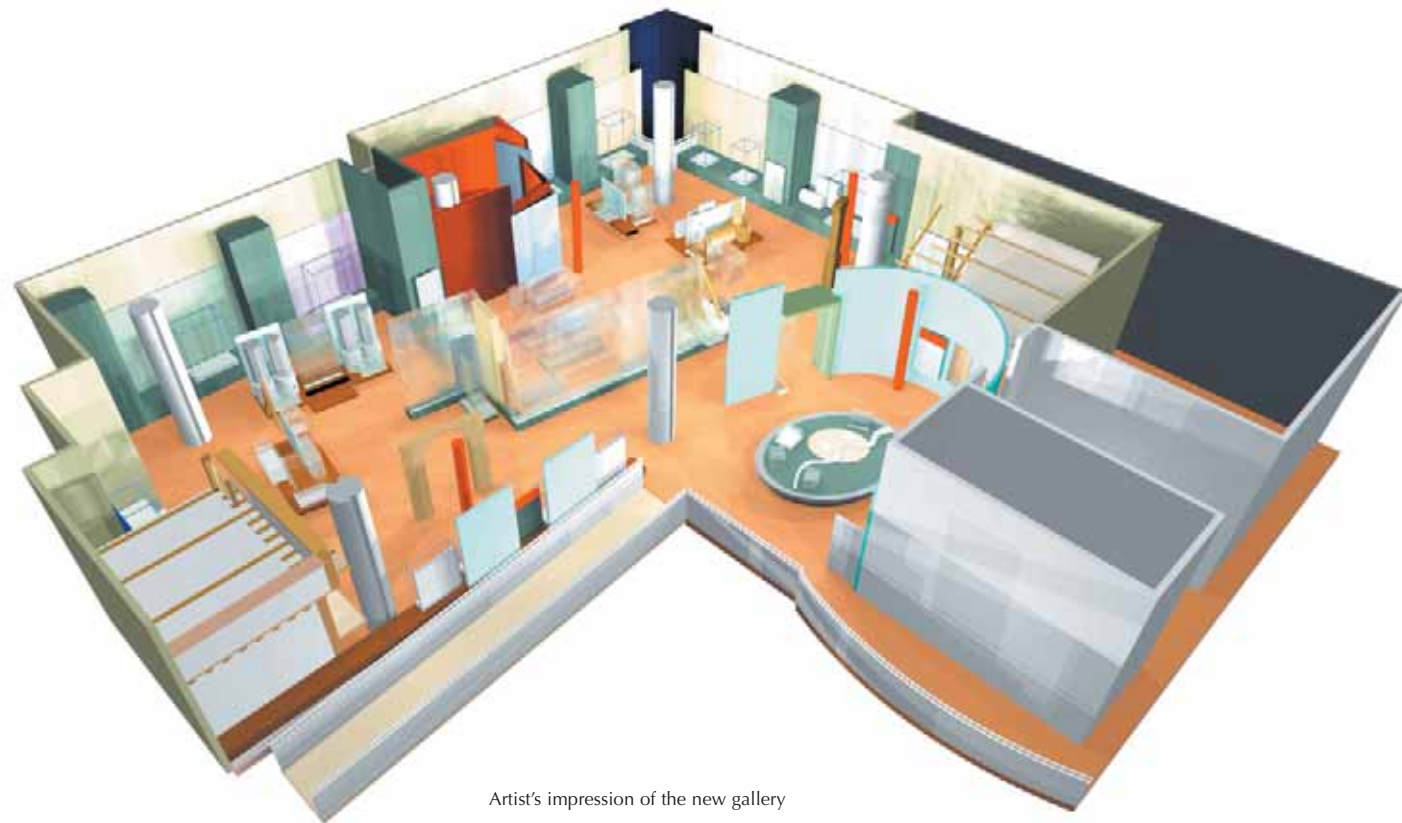
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Reconstructed Auquharney deer trap, from Graham-Smith 1923. Reproduced by courtesy of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland



# A NEW MEDIEVAL GALLERY FOR THE MUSEUM OF LONDON

Hedley Swain



Artist's impression of the new gallery

The Museum of London's mission is to inspire a passion for London; we do this through temporary exhibitions and events but also through permanent galleries that tell the story of London from prehistory to the twentieth century. This November our medieval gallery re-opened after its first complete re-design for thirty years. Indeed the old gallery was very much the design put in place when the Museum first opened in 1976, designed by Jasper Jacobs. In the meantime there have been thirty years of archaeological discovery and historical research and, perhaps most importantly, thirty years of development in the way museum communicate with their audiences. London has also changed in that time and the type and expectations of museum visitors has also become more diverse and sophisticated. But the old gallery was considered a 'design classic' so there is a special responsibility to replace an old favourite with a gallery that the Museum can be proud of.

## Londinium to Elizabeth

The new gallery will tell the story of Greater London, but more specifically central London, from the early fifth century when Roman rule was withdrawn and Londinium abandoned, until the accession of Elizabeth I in 1558. This period takes in some of the most traumatic and momentous events in London's history. These include the development of *Lundenwic*, the Middle Saxon trading port now lost below modern Covent Garden; Viking raids along the Thames and refounding of London within the old boundaries of the Roman city by Alfred the Great; the Black Death of 1348-9; and finally the dissolution of the monasteries and the Protestant reformation. These major events will form a narrative spine. By using them we hope to help visitors make sense of how the medieval period developed, but also show how some of the more traditional dates, such as the Norman conquest of 1066 and the battle of Bosworth had a relatively minor effect on the day to day life of Londoners.

## Riches of the river

Despite these disruptions London grew and prospered using the River Thames as a major

transport artery to the outside world. At the beginning of the period Roman London has failed and there is no urban population at all, but by 1558 London is far the biggest city in England and was becoming one of the great cities of Europe. Therefore another key part of the gallery will be the influence of the river and the people who made London their home. It is in this area, due to many years of archaeological excavation, that the Museum's collections are so rich. The gallery will include many everyday items, including leather shoes and items of clothing that have been preserved in waterlogged conditions close to the Thames. Finds also illustrate the role of London as an international port, goods and people coming from all over Europe. Some major archaeological finds will be put on permanent display for the first time. These include a section of the medieval Thames waterfront and parts of a late Saxon aisled hall.

## Death first hand

The gallery will also include two major audiovisual installations. One will act as an introduction to the gallery and show how the city developed. Another will deal with the Black Death. Using primarily sound, it will relate first hand experiences of living through this devastating time.



Conserving Saxon revetments at MoL. This work was done in public, so that visitors could enjoy seeing work 'behind the scenes'. Photograph © MoL

Much in the gallery is being designed for families. There will be a series of interactives for children and three computer terminals to provide additional information and games. A number of captions written specifically for children will be spread around the gallery. In addition it is planned to build partial reconstructions of a tenth-century Saxon house and a fifteenth-century bookshop exterior.

The Museum's internal project team has developed the gallery with external design firm At Large. The gallery will open at the end of November and itself acts as a foretaste of further gallery redevelopments that will see the entire lower part of the Museum redeveloped to cover the years 1666 to the modern day.

Hedley Swain  
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Silver collar from the Thames, 1440-50. The links are part of the Lancastrian livery, so this probably belonged to a royal official. Photograph © MoL



Billingsgate Saxon revetments in situ. These will be part of the new displays. Photograph: Andy Chopping

# Tracing the terrible Tudors

Geoff Egan

The 1500s are surprisingly poorly represented by finds assemblages – a stark contrast with the prominence of the Tudor era in history and literature. With the exception of a handful of celebrated sites like the Mary Rose, finds groups which include well preserved metals and organics have simply not been forthcoming. London's medieval Thames-side reclamation sequence ceased in the City about 1450 with the construction of a river wall. This lasted for centuries, abruptly ending the extensive assemblages from reclamation dumps. However, redevelopment in 1992 of a site facing the Tower of London showed that the reclamation sequence did continue on the south bank east of the metropolitan centre. An unusually wide spectrum of urban life, from aristocratic palace to knacker's yard, was represented, and finds retrieval here proved some of the finest hours' work for MOLAS's full-time detectorist, Alan Gammon.

## Toys and trinkets

Dress accessories found here included a remarkably elaborate wound-wire girdle, probably for a girl, and doubtless a misery to keep in shape while worn – the slightest snag or knock would have unwound or distorted such flimsy fashions. There are several variations of a kind of dress hook that is well



Front openwork panel from a composite toy chest of pewter, early sixteenth century. Photograph Maggie Cox © MoLAS

known from unstratified finds but rarely encountered in closely datable deposits. This applies, too, to children's playthings, of which more than half a dozen were recovered. A panel from a toy chest and a tiny plate with maker's initials near the rim are both pewter, while the base of a candlestick (matching a stem with a pair of cups from Buckinghamshire) is a more robust copper alloy, allowing it to be used with a tiny rushlight.

## Pilgrims and villains

This was the last generation in England to follow some traditional Catholic practices, including popular pilgrimages. Cheap badges were a common souvenir of this special category of travel. Many traditional beliefs were coming into question by the late 1400s; nevertheless, among more than forty badges found are several for the cult of Henry VI, whom the still diffident Tudors presented as a saintly political martyr from their ranks, put to death by the rival Yorkist faction. The cult of Becket at Canterbury is still prominent in the assemblage, as is the final flowering of that of Our Lady of Walsingham. The first badge to be identified with certainty from Bermondsey Abbey, in the form of its famous Rood, had only travelled a few hundred yards to its findspot.



Lead/tin souvenir badge of the cult of Henry VI, showing the king standing on his heraldic beast, an antelope, early sixteenth century. Photograph Maggie Cox © MoLAS

It seems to have been a violent age, from the large number of street-wear daggers and swords recovered, along with parts of the new hand guns. Armour is another new feature of the period. One plate from a brigandine, with a red-dyed textile covering scattered with tiny, tin-coated, star-like studs, is visually impressive, but not technologically as well made or robust as plainer-looking plates with very subtle shaping after hours of expert smithing.

## Poor tokens

Few coins were recovered, though in compensation there are many copper-alloy counting tokens made in southern Germany. Those from the early 1500s were particularly poorly produced, often with nonsense legends made up of meaningless jumbles of letters, some upside down or back-to-front. It seems strange that at a time when literacy was becoming widespread, these wretched products continued to be shipped across half of Europe, instead of a better industry being established closer to England. There are over seventy lead/tin tokens, probably used as small change – a range never noted for high production values but at this time plumbing new depths with the roughest versions yet seen.

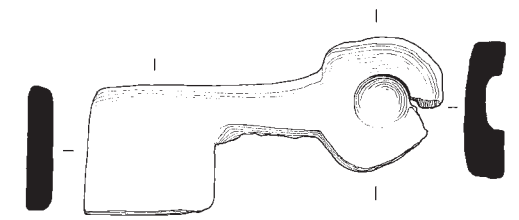
## Smiths and knackers

Evidence for manufacturing was the most difficult to identify. Failed smithing products have been recognised, including table knives – one in which asymmetry gives away its unfinished state and a further couple for which X-rays reveal metallurgical faults at the points where they must have broken on the anvil while being worked under the hammer. This fate is more immediately evident in an iron key. Entirely in isolation is part of an ingot of pure antimony from a deposit assigned to the late 1500s – this metal is otherwise unrepresented in such a refined state in England at least for a century. A handful of early sixteenth-century horse-shoes are worn beyond the nail holes, a state otherwise unknown at any date. They suggest that there was a knacker's yard in the area, which for some exhausted horses was the end of a painful road.

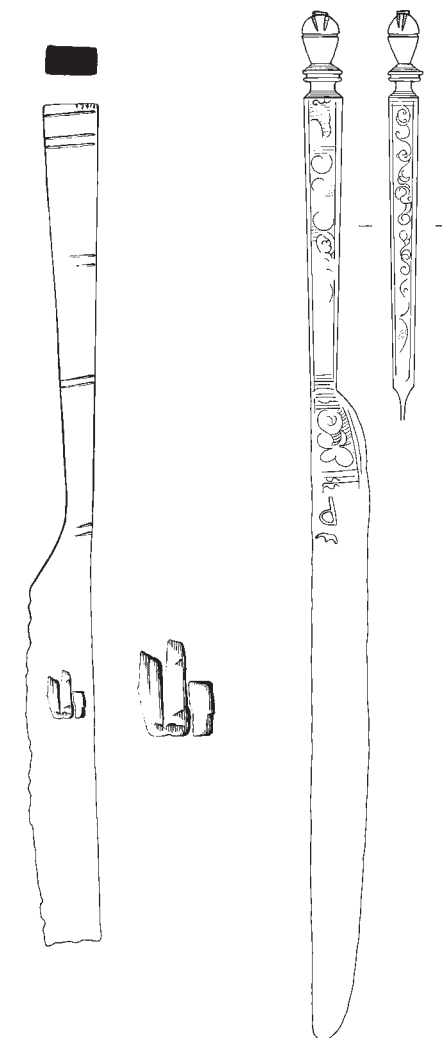
There is still much to learn about the everyday material culture of the age of transition from the medieval to the early modern world. For some reason the generation c1450-80 remains obstinately obscure in these terms. A significant archaeological base-line has now been drawn for the fascinating Tudor century however, to set against future finds.

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Iron key broken on the anvil while being shaped, sixteenth century. Drawing by Faith Vardy © MoLAS



Two knives entirely of iron, late sixteenth century. One has the broken tip discarded, without completion of the ornament in the panels and the (?)maker's mark obliterated. The other, with subtle decoration, retains its stamp. Drawing by Faith Vardy © MoLAS

terrible Tudors

# Today's rubbish, tomorrow's archaeology: using nineteenth and twentieth-century finds



Local children get to work cleaning up archaeology of the recent past at the LAARC. Photograph Alison Taylor

For three weeks last July the Museum of London excavated the remains of five early Victorian terraced houses in east London that had been damaged in the Second World War and demolished in the 1960s to make way for Shoreditch Park. Due to the modernity of the site and abundant historical records dating was not a major issue but, using finds, we were able to add important information on the socio-economic lives of the people that lived there: where and with what they played, where their kitchen pottery came from, what types of shellfish they ate. Add the fantastic oral histories that were collected and you can really recreate the lives of the people that lived here in Dorchester Street.

### Pottery and nylons

The finds begin with use of the site as open farmland adjacent to the road to the City of London. They range from the base of a Raeren jug of late fifteenth to mid-sixteenth century date through to a pair of nylon stockings, probably from the 1950s! Large quantities of pottery included evidence for the lingering popularity of blue and white Willow Pattern. The pottery largely dates from the mid-nineteenth to twentieth centuries, although earlier wares are present too.

### Pantiles and clay pipes

With the building material assemblage, dominance of ceramic pantiles over slates is at first perhaps surprising. At this time the house roofs would probably have had slates, with pantiles on back extensions. The archaeological assemblage is perhaps

Faye Simpson and Jackie Keily

One of a great number of late clay pipes from the excavation. Photograph © MoL



explained by pre-demolition stripping of slates whilst the lower quality pantiles were discarded. Another surprising aspect is the quantity of tobacco pipes on this late site, reminding us that cigarettes really only became dominant after the First World War and that many older people continued to smoke clay pipes for some time after this.

### Playing and dancing

At the start of this project we were all asked what our dream finds would be. Francis Grew commented that his would be a toy that the children who visited the site would relate to. One of our first finds was part of a toy plane, a model of a P38 Lockheed Lightning, and we also found marbles, a mid-nineteenth-century 'flat' lead-alloy soldier and fragments of china dolls. The 'war' toys make us think about life for the children of Shoreditch growing up during and after the war, making the bombsites their playgrounds and playing with toys that were replicas of those flying above. Many past residents visiting the excavations reminisced about the former in particular. Other objects associated with the Second World War included a Royal Artillery cap badge and a Navy

One of our first finds – was part of a toy plane, a model of a P38 Lockheed Lightning. Photograph © MoL



button. The former brought to life the reminiscences of one of the older residents: 'we used to collect these badges as tokens of who we danced with.'

All objects tell a story, but when added to an archaeological context and backed with historical records and oral histories they most come to life. Modern archaeological finds shed light on a not so distant past and we should not disregard them just because they are well documented. Time and traditions move quickly – some of the children who visited the site had never seen an 'old-fashioned' milk bottle and didn't know what coal was for ('a barbecue?'). This project has been a fascinating one, on so many levels. We look forward to the next stage of analysing the evidence, but even this preliminary overview has reminded us of how many of our pre-conceived notions about 'modern' archaeology have been proved wrong.

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# Working with finds in a contract organisation: Cotswold Archaeology

Ed McSloy

Like other contracting organisations, Cotswold Archaeology is involved each year in a mix of large-scale excavations, evaluations, watching briefs and building recording projects, with nearly all invasive projects producing finds of some sort. These encompass all archaeological periods, which requires a broad knowledge base plus a well stocked library and a network of specialist advisers at hand. Integrating a conservator into the finds team also pays dividends.

## Pottery puzzles

Analysis of pottery rarely excites the attention of more spectacular objects, but its analysis routinely forms an integral part of excavation publications, providing the dating framework and evidence for status or function. Just occasionally, even with well-studied subject matter such as Roman pottery, there emerge individual finds which arouse wider interest as unusual or puzzling objects. Just such an instance is this Roman Severn Valley ware vessel from near Tewkesbury, Glos. Few vessels of this type, a variant form of 'costrel', are known from Roman Britain and whilst use as some form of liquid (oil?) container is suspected, the exact purpose remains unclear.

Recent finds by Cotswold Archaeology include a succession of important individual finds ranging from a rare Palaeolithic handaxe to an exceptional Late Saxon carved bone mount from Malmesbury. Two groups of objects in particular demonstrate the value of remedial conservation work undertaken soon after discovery.

## Roman jetsetters

The range and quality of grave goods from a Roman burial at Denham, Bucks is exceptional, consisting of seven jet hairpins, a jet finger ring, a shale spindle whorl, three blue glass discs (of

uncertain purpose), and a necklace incorporating over 400 glass beads and 8 jet 'spacers'. Bracelets of copper alloy and ivory were also recovered, the latter identified as such by the conservator under microscopic examination. Unusually, the circumstances of recovery, within a narrow access road strip, adjacent to the main area of excavation, means that it is unclear whether this was an isolated burial or one of a group. The main area of excavations produced extensive evidence for Roman activity and considerable quantities of brick and tile, suggestive of a Romanised structure in the area.

The glass beads consist mainly of segmented, cuboid or cylinder forms of various colours and 'gold-in-glass' types, in which gold foil is sandwiched between a core and sealing layer of clear glass. This class of bead, the technique for which may have originated in Ptolemaic Egypt, is most commonly encountered in Britain in Late Roman and early Anglo-Saxon periods. The form of the beads (and of the hairpins, ring and bracelets) signifies a broadly Late Roman date (c. AD 270 to 400+), however, the presence of 'appearing black' beads suggests this is a very late Roman interment, almost certainly dating after AD 370. Although graves of this date and of comparable richness are known from large urban cemeteries, for example in Winchester, it is rare for such well appointed burials of this date to emerge from a rural site.

## Saxons in the west

The Tewkesbury Anglo Saxon burial was less spectacularly arrayed, interred with a necklace of glass and amber beads, an iron knife and an iron and copper-alloy buckle. This, together with an associated but unfurnished burial, was the only Saxon period feature identified within an enclosed farmstead of Roman date. It is provisionally dated, on the basis of the glass beads (with parallels in

Kent and the Continent) to the late sixth or early seventh century. The range of grave goods is unexceptional for the period but the location, in the north Gloucestershire Severn valley, makes this one of the most westerly pagan Saxon burials yet discovered.

In both cases, the presence of potentially unstable materials, jet, shale and amber, meant that conservation treatment and expert packaging had to be organised swiftly. The work of the conservator, Esther Cameron, which included x-rays of the metal finds in addition to cleaning and stabilisation, made a vital contribution to the interpretation. Both sites are currently being assessed, with full publication and museum deposition to follow in due course.

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Severn Valley ware vessel from near Tewkesbury, Glos



Ninth or tenth-century bone mount from Malmesbury, Wilts

*Cotswold Archaeology carries out projects throughout the UK, although mostly within western and central-southern England, and currently employs around 50 staff, including five working in its finds and environmental team.*

Late Roman jet, shale and glass objects from Denham, Bucks



Photographs: Cotswold Archaeology



Sixth or early seventh-century iron knife and glass and amber beads from near Tewkesbury, Glos



## AN ILLUSTRATOR'S LOT IS (or can be...)

### A HAPPY ONE

Joanna Richards

Illustrations have always had a vital part to play in archaeology, and I am proud to be part of that tradition. The earliest archaeological draftsmen produced maps, site and artefact drawings that still convey vital information to us today.

The first premise of illustrations must be accuracy. An artefact should be drawn so that it can be re-made from the illustration, and reconstructions must be thoroughly researched and authentic, but also convincing and life-like. There are many skills involved in achieving this, and it is vital for the finds specialist and the illustrator to communicate well. Sometimes colleagues fail to recognise that the artist may also be an archaeologist, and has an academic, as well as visual, contribution to make. It is also important for illustrators to realise the importance of keeping up-to-date with best practice and new developments in the discipline. As a Member of the AAI&S and an AIFA I am enabled to do this. Attending conferences also makes an enjoyable break to a solitary occupation for the freelancer.



There is a great deal of illustration produced digitally but, although ICT skills are a vital part of any work, I use traditional methods. I love my PC, but the software programmes have not yet made it an artist. Whatever is used, the aim is to bring an object or past landscape to life on the page, with subtlety of shading or human touches.

There are downsides: when self-employed, long delays in payment can be demoralising, and despite having a 30-day payment term, I find it impossible to enforce this. It is vital to have a signed contract when starting a project; many organisations are unaware that copyright and ownership belong to the artist if self-employed (see p5). I am also still asked the *Piece of String* question: 'How many flints/pots/brooches can you draw in a day?' (without having seen the material.)

However, there are encouraging developments. There is more integration between text and illustrations created by digital publishing, and illustrators are being recognised as specialists in their own right. For my part, I feel privileged to work with wide variety of material and the thrill of dealing with ancient material never leaves me. Then there are the moments we all recognise, like a flint tool that fits as perfectly in the right hand as it would have done when it was first made; and I am reminded why I entered the profession in the first place.

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La Tène stud from Devon, drawn for the Portable Antiquities Scheme by Jo Richards

## Integration or independence: what do we do with the Finds reports?

Roy Stephenson

Finds, in the inclusive IFA sense of the word, are playing a closer role in publications, as pottery, building material, bone, registered finds and environmental evidence become central to a site's narrative. Look for instance how MoLAS' monographs of excavations at St Mary Spital blended field evidence and finds stories into a seamless narrative. This formulation continues to the recent Stratford Langthorne publication, with the integrated narrative supplemented by specialist appendices.

The end result can be attractive, and often the field data are enhanced by sitting next to finds evidence; the reader is drawn through a narrative illustrated by environmental reports, artefacts and pottery drawings. In *Settlement in Roman Southwark: archaeological excavations (1991-8)* for the Jubilee Line Extension Project, fusion of photographic images and line drawing give the best of both worlds.

So what is the down side of these glossy colourful popular publications? Well, ask any specialist contributor to these books. St Mary Spital had over

twenty separate contributors, Stratford Langthorne fifteen, from pottery to parasite eggs. These specialists will tell you they have little control over how their data are integrated, usually by a field archaeologist without full knowledge of all specialisms. There will inevitably be failures to integrate successfully, even poor comprehension of a specialist contribution. Then comes the edit stage, another logistics nightmare. You have a dozen contributors – what happens if one is over subscribed? The whole process grinds to a halt. I write as a specialist who is holding up one publication through lack of time. Then, faced with two lever arch files, just how are you expected to find your contribution? You guessed it: read the whole thing. Potentially the same happens at page proof reading, you mine the proofs looking for your own bit.

So should we return to a conventional format where specialists sit in sections called 'The animal bone', 'The Quern Stone' or 'The Window Glass', divorced from the site narrative? At least the specialists can fill their bibliographies accurately. Or perhaps take specialist contributions and use them any way you think fit? The specialist then stumbles across a distorted view of their reality in a journal. Yes this does happen, and you know who you are and you should be ashamed. Alright, we realise you have no budget left, but it's common courtesy to let the specialist know what you are doing!

The answer is communication, team meetings, sufficient and accurate project briefings, indexed drafts and being brave enough to ask if you are not sure. Another way is handing the integration to a finds specialist: you might be pleasantly surprised. After all, see the review of finds-centric volumes such as *Material culture in London in an age of transition: Tudor and Stuart period finds c 1450-c 1700* (p41).

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# View from the Finds Shed

Talla Hopper



Anglo-Saxon beads from Ramsgate. Being able to handle beads in person beats any amount of scholarly descriptions in books. Photograph: Elaine Wakefield © Wessex Archaeology

You can call me a pot washer; and no, it's not boring. I work in the Finds Department at Wessex Archaeology as an Assistant Supervisor. I'm often the first to see things that were invisible in the field: the maker's mark on pottery, graffiti on a Roman amphora or the dog's paw print on a tile. I wash, mark, and record finds (all our finds data go straight onto computer, using either databases or spreadsheets). I bag, box and shelve them, ready for various specialists. It's certainly not humdrum. I can go from nineteenth-century brick to an Anglo-Saxon brooch via medieval glass or Peterborough ware. I've learned a great deal about the material culture of the past; for instance, the sheer amount of 'stuff' the Romans had, even on small rural sites.

At Wessex Archaeology we are lucky to have a large dedicated area for finds. The former RAF Operations Room lends itself to large units of roller racking and static shelving, and in the 'wet' area we have shelves for unprocessed finds, tables for washing and for marking and yet more shelves for drying racks. Plus space for empty boxes, plastic



An enameled brooch from a Roman temple site at Springhead. The detail only became apparent in the Finds Room. Photograph: Elaine Wakefield © Wessex Archaeology

tubs, rolls of foam, boxes of plastic bags and all the other paraphernalia of finds work.

Or you can call us finds processors. Between April 2004 and March 2005 we dealt with 111 projects: a total of 2040 sample sacks weighing 10891 kgs. With finds on this almost industrial scale we have to have order, and the whole business is carefully monitored. All bulk finds are weighed on arrival, giving project managers a good idea of how long their finds will take to process. We allow on average one hour per kilo for washing and a further hour to mark, record, bag and box. Obviously sometimes this is not possible, but it does work out in a majority of cases.

I'm aware that finds processing has the reputation for being 'uncool'. This is a shame as a knowledge of finds, particularly dating knowledge, is one of the essential skills of any archaeologist. The material we deal with is often all that is left of a site after excavation and we try to give it the respect it deserves. I love dealing with the material left behind by the generations before us: to me it's what archaeology is all about and I'd hate to change my job.

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## The last box to be ticked –

### how archaeological contractors deal with archives



Mick Rawlings

As a Project Manager for a major archaeological contractor I had a brief checklist for each project. The final box was: *archive deposited*. When I left I checked the projects I had managed and saw that the archives of 132 out of 200 projects had been deposited.

#### So what happened to the rest?

Some were complete and awaiting deposition, some were awaiting publication, some passed to colleagues to complete. However, twenty were completed but not deposited, either because the landowner would not agree deposition of the artefacts; or the recipient body had no space. The first is an issue between the contractor and client, and may be resolved once the right person actually answers correspondence. The second is more serious.

Most archaeological work results in primary archive material, and excavators are taught from day one that this archive is critical. Then a secondary archive is created in the form of draft reports and assessments. In this stage, whilst the project manager will retain overall responsibility, the archive is (hopefully) being continuously worked on by individuals with their own set of responsibilities, so the archive may cease to be a single entity. Responsibility is of course vested in the organisation, an issue addressed to some extent by IFA's RAO scheme. However, it is also important to ensure that individuals remain aware of their own roles and responsibilities.

Preservation by record is usually necessary to satisfy a planning condition, but do all development control archaeologists ask for proof that this has happened (though some certainly do)? It is worth

noting that planning guidance does not currently mention archive deposition.

The various elements of the archive (environmental materials, artefacts, paperwork, digital data, photographs etc) are stored in various locations. A major problem for large projects in progress over several years is 'archive diaspora', especially when there are periods of inactivity.

Most contractors are not set up to provide long-term storage, and there are issues such as space, conservation, emergency planning, security, media updates etc that need to be considered. Archives should also be publicly accessible, so if the potential recipient body has run out of space and is not accepting material, this is a real problem. Who is now responsible for non-compliance? I remember taking this up with a development control archaeologist in a county where there were no museums accepting archives. If I write a clause into a Project Design that I know cannot be implemented, I place my client in a very exposed position. But if there is no provision for deposition, then surely we have not achieved preservation by record.

This is a concern with regard to professional standards. If we do not deposit primary records in a publicly accessible archive, are we not in breach of Principles 2 and 4 of the *Code of conduct*? If we carry out a project knowing deposition cannot be guaranteed, are we not in breach of points 6 and 19 of the *Code of Approved Practice for the regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*? Let's hope that current work by the Society of Museum Archaeologists, and the Archaeological Archives Forum (see p11), can help us sort this looming problem.

Mick Rawlings  
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# Sharing the fun of finds

Kate Osborne



What could be better than holding real Roman pottery in your hands – 2000 years old (give or take)? Maybe a Roman soldier owned this pot. What kind of shape was the amphora – and how would you work this out from the pieces in front of you? What are those gritty bits on that piece for? What does it tell you about Roman cooking methods? And those barnacles on the bottom of that dish – do they show it was probably in a shipwreck? But that one's different. It's got 'made in Cyprus' on the bottom – but could you tell the real from the replica without it? And what kind of materials are tesserae made of? And there's a surprise – they're not perfect cubes after all – why's that then?

All sorts of questions like this are batted about at our regular Roman Friday and Saturday Funday at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery in Exeter. Funded through *Renaissance* – the Government's groundbreaking scheme for improving regional museums, and Exeter City Council, the days are aimed at children aged 7 – 11 and their families. We put the Romans literally into people's hands.

## ■ Connecting collections

Run on a drop-in basis from 10am until 4pm, we lay out tables of handling artefacts and let people pick them up and play with them and chat with them about it all. We make the link between the handling materials, the collections on display and Exeter's Roman story. We vary from toddlers (who love wax tablets) to grandparents (who are usually game to be bound in togas). As ever, it's enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff who bring the artefacts to life

John Smith, one of our regular Roman re-enactors and educators, helps our younger visitors to get the first-hand feel of Roman armour. Photograph Dave Garner

but the real artefacts and their survival which bring the inspiration. Usually we wear authentic dress but last week the laundry accidentally dyed all our tunics Barbie pink so there's a slight hiatus there.

## ■ Living the life

What can you do on these days? We have a range of Roman activities with original artefacts heavily supplemented by replica wares that add a valuable dimension to the real stuff. So, you can meet a 'real' Roman soldier in full kit, try on *lorica segmentata* and *hamata* and helmets, make up a *testudo*, carry the standard, march in Roman drill, write your name on wax tablets. You can also try on a toga, make a magnetic mosaic design, blow a *cornu* and work out how Roman roof tiles worked. The favourite item of all, inevitably, is the sponge on the stick..... Many children have 'done' the Romans at school and come back as mini-experts showing their siblings, Grans and Dads just how much they know. Others are about to do it and have been brought along to get ahead of the competition. Whichever, there's always something for them to do that makes all the difference.

## ■ No digging – yet

One thing we haven't yet explored properly is including an area which gets across the principles of archaeological discovery, recording and conservation. We work in the museum's local history galleries which are tight spaces, usually jam packed with people on these days, so the examples of digs with soil, sand and water which I think sound brilliant, make the colour drain from my face. But we are missing out here and any ideas from readers will be gratefully received! We talk about why we only have 'bits' left but another dimension to showing why and how this is would be a good thing. Because the centre of Exeter is being excavated due to major demolition for a new shopping mall, we can make sure people go and see a real, live dig from the informative viewing area that exists, but once that is gone it'll be more difficult again.

But after all the excitement – it's still the really real Roman stuff, that tangible link directly back to the really real Romans that grips them most of all. Long live handling collections with real stuff in them.



Children get to grips with real and replica artefacts at a Saturday Roman Family Funday at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter. Photograph Dave Garner

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# Review:

## The Production, Analysis and Standardisation of Romano-British Coin Reports

Peter Guest

Roman coins have played a crucial role in the history of Romano-British studies, providing absolute dates for excavated stratigraphy as well as for typologies of other artefacts. Study of archaeologically recovered coin assemblages has enabled archaeologists to see that different types of Romano-British settlements often produce distinctive coin lists, enabling sophisticated discussions regarding the production, supply, use and loss of Roman coins.

In the past, although coin reports usually followed the same basic format, there was no commonly accepted 'right' way of listing and analysing

excavated Roman coins. While there is nothing wrong with diversity, lack of a national framework has certainly hindered study of coins of Roman Britain. Therefore, publication of guidelines by English Heritage is a significant event for numismatists and archaeologists alike. Unfortunately, the guidelines are weak in several important areas and the report should be considered carefully before it is adopted as the industry standard.

### *The academic partition of Roman Britain*

The guidelines were originally commissioned to solve the north/south divide that exists in Romano-British coin studies. Although the same coins are found throughout Britain, different chronological schemes are used in the north and in the south. This situation arose in the 1970s and 1980s when John Casey at Durham and Richard Reece in London devised different arrangements for dividing the Roman period in Britain: Casey's scheme uses 27 Issue Periods while Reece subdivides Roman Britain into only 21 Issue Periods. The division persists today and so it is consequently difficult to compare northern and southern site finds. Initially intended to overcome this unfortunate situation, the guidelines' remit was extended to include how Roman coins are identified, recorded and published. The assumption seems to be mandatory standardisation of coin reports throughout the archaeological community (there is no point replacing a geographical division with an institutional one), though the lack of dissemination of the report suggests unwillingness to pursue this ambition.

### *A complicated 'solution'*

The solution to the north/south division involves a new chronological scheme that is poorly thought out and impractical. Any attempt to unify existing schemes has to simplify rather than complicate, yet

the EH guidelines propose a new arrangement of 36 'Coin Periods' into which the Casey and Reece schemes should be expanded. This is impossible without going back to original lists and reallocating coins to the new 36 Periods, and it would have made more sense to propose a simplified scheme into which previously published material could be recalculated (the Casey and Reece schemes are sufficiently similar to allow this to happen, although there would be some loss of definition). Alternatively, one of the existing schemes could have been adopted. This might offend half of Britain, but would avoid having to convert everything published until now.

### *Which data to record?*

English Heritage also recommends a standard format for identification and listing, but the published guidelines contain too many inaccuracies and eccentricities to become the industry standard – for example 'Aurelianus' to describe coins struck after Aurelian's reform of the coinage in 275 – a pointless term that has no historical basis and is not commonly used by numismatists today. Also, should all coins be weighed, have their wear assessed or die-axes measured without showing if these data are worthwhile? Describing a worn coin is notoriously subjective and, in any case, wear is not a reliable indicator of a coin's circulation or a measure of residuality. Nor have I seen evidence for the need to record each coin's die-axis. The guidelines would see a substantial increase in the cost of coin reports, as numismatists are forced to record obscure or meaningless data.

### *Detail and presentation*

The guidelines deal almost exclusively with how coins should be identified and reported. It is surprising that no reference is made to the post-excavation process, or that MAP2 is not mentioned. There is no advice on what assessment of a coin assemblage should entail, how archaeologists, numismatists and conservators might work together effectively, or how excavated coins can contribute to formulation of broader archaeological objectives. Various options are put forward on presenting coin catalogues (from full lists of all data to abbreviated summaries), yet who decides the appropriate level? In any event, the layouts of the proposed full,

interim and summary catalogues are so unsatisfactory that the information would be intelligible to only a handful of specialists – hardly a step forward.

English Heritage rightly sees the need to unify study of site finds in Britain, but these guidelines require substantial revision before they are acceptable to numismatists and archaeologists. Consultation with the Portable Antiquities Scheme and the IFA Finds Group, among others, would have produced a far more useful series of guidelines.

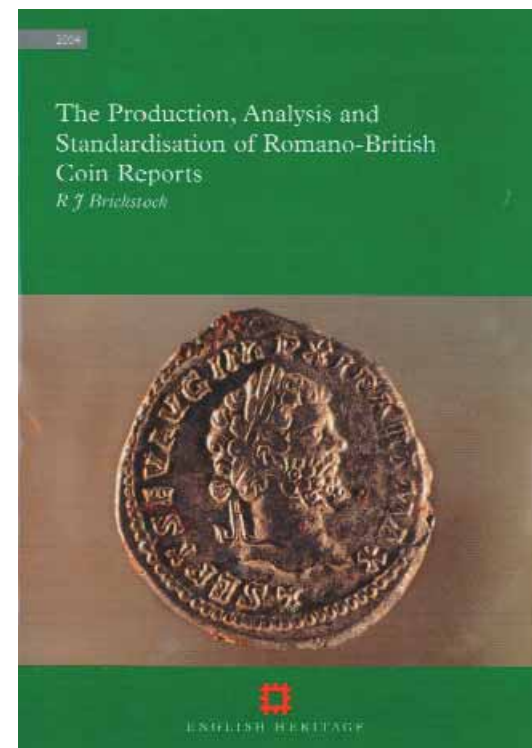
Peter Guest

Lecturer in Roman Archaeology, Cardiff University



Reverse of a sestertius struck for Antoninus Pius in AD 143-4 showing the personification of Britannia. Photograph © P. Guest

English Heritage guidelines



Hard copies of the English Heritage guidelines on the identification, reporting and analysis of Roman coins can be obtained directly from the Customer Services Department (tel: 0870 333 1181 or [customers@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:customers@english-heritage.org.uk)), or can be downloaded from ([http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/roman\\_coins\\_web.pdf](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/upload/pdf/roman_coins_web.pdf)).

Brickstock, R 2004 *The Production, Analysis and Standardisation of Romano-British Coin Reports*. English Heritage

# ARCHAEOLOGY AND POLITICS

responding to consultations

Christopher Catling (editor of SALON-IFA) looks at the art of responding to Government consultations and at the best ways of getting your message across

In the first *Archaeology and Politics* column I claimed, somewhat cynically, that civil servants draft consultation documents so as to ensure the answers support measures they have already decided upon. It is equally true that consultations are worth taking very seriously and are one of the most important ways that archaeologists can participate in the political process.

## CONSULTATION TORRENT

One of the defining characteristics of New Labour is the torrent of consultative documents from central government departments and government agencies. Green Papers (discussion documents) and White Papers (specific proposals) have all but disappeared from the political lexicon; instead we have consultations and draft bills. This expansion has been paralleled by greater reliance on policy guidance, drafted by civil servants, in preference to primary legislation. In our own sphere, the previous Government's PPGs 15 and 16 are perfect examples of 'para-statutory' instruments, lacking the full weight of the parliamentary process and not statutorily enforceable, but with a powerful kick nonetheless.

Nothing could better exemplify the new emphasis on consultation than the Heritage Protection Review (published as a set of draft recommendations for consultation in 2004), which proposes that no building or monument will be designated in the future without public consultation. Even the criteria for designation are being submitted to public scrutiny, which is why DCMS published a document this July making explicit how English Heritage decides which sites and buildings should be listed (copies can be downloaded from the DCMS website, but the deadline for responses was 17 October).

## INDIVIDUALS AND CONSENSUS

A key point about consultations is that, in theory, anyone can respond, and the views of individuals can be as influential as any large organisation. We saw this when ferocious opposition from volunteer archaeologists to some aspects of the Valletta Convention killed dead an idea that metal detecting might be subject to a licensing system. In general, though, ministers and civil servants lend more weight to bodies that represent the sector and command the support of the sector's leading institutions. They value consensus and (perhaps with Valletta in mind) have accused the heritage sector in the past of being ill-coordinated and fragmented.

The formation of The Archaeological Forum (TAF) is helping to dispel that myth. Previously known as HEF (Historic Environment Forum), this grouping of independent national archaeological organisations meets regularly to discuss matters of common concern, to establish shared positions and to promote clear and consistent messages on archaeological policy. TAF has published a document – *Archaeology enriches us all* – setting out some of the group's core beliefs, and this will serve as the foundation for developing more specific proposals and policy positions on topics such as archaeology and education, development control, and the role of the Heritage Lottery Fund (<[www.britarch.ac.uk/archforum/index.html](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/archforum/index.html)>).

## GETTING ON THE RADAR

Why not leave it to TAF to speak for us all? That makes sense, but Government likes plurality as much as consensus, and also judges the success of a consultation on the numbers of responses. More positively, by responding to consultations, you put yourself on the political radar screen. If your views

are well argued and based on sound evidence, you will be counted as having made a valuable contribution. You or your organisation might well be invited to give further evidence or to join an advisory group or working party set up to advise Government on implementation.

How do you then make the maximum impact? A generous-spirited civil servant once gave me the following practical tips

- assume civil servants are already aware of the positions of the leading archaeology groups in the UK and of the main pressure groups for the heritage. What they want is not a reiteration of philosophical principles but concrete proposals for addressing the issues under debate
- consultation documents set out Government's proposals; if you don't agree you need to be able to argue cogently – responses have to be positive and constructive
- your first page should be a summary bringing to the fore your main practical measures. A good summary helps civil servants, as they don't have to prepare their own summary; it ensures that your views are accurately transmitted, and it increases the likelihood of the minister actually seeing what you say
- state clearly what you want Government to do, and why intervention is necessary and appropriate. Government will only intervene if it is convinced that it, and it alone, can make a socially desirable difference
- favour is always given to ideas that have no fiscal or funding implications
- if you send your response in hard copy form, always send a Word attachment by email as well, to enable the civil servant to cut and paste your views into the summary document that goes to the minister.

All this implies time and creative energy. The sheer volume of consultations has created a new job within the heritage world, the policy officer. Large organisations have staff devoted to keeping in touch with the policy proposals of European, national,

regional and local governments and seeking to influence the outcome. Less well-funded bodies rely on their directors or volunteers, and it is often difficult to do as good a job as they might like.

There will be any number of committees that will gladly accept your offer if you volunteer to become their Consultations Secretary, responsible for drafting responses, and there are some big consultations on the horizon (Heritage Protection, and the future of the Heritage Lottery Fund, for example) that no archaeological body can ignore – full details of all Government consultations are given in the fortnightly *Salon-IFA* email bulletin (which IFA members can subscribe to by sending an email to [alex.llewellyn@archaeologists.net](mailto:alex.llewellyn@archaeologists.net)).

Christopher Catling  
[Christopher.Catling@virgin.net](mailto:Christopher.Catling@virgin.net)

A booklet issued by the Archaeology Forum sets out core beliefs and principles for the historic environment



## Archaeology enriches us all

Everything that is special about Britain has been touched and shaped by millennia of daily human lives – creativity, conflict, changing beliefs and technologies.

Archaeology is about uncovering, recording and interpreting that story. And for all but the last 2,000 of over 500,000 years, archaeology is central to our understanding and appreciation of this rich and diverse past. It helps explain the growth of our towns and cities and the evolution of our countryside as well as our relationship with nature and the spiritual world.

### Why does archaeology matter?

- Archaeology is key to understanding an irreplaceable store of human history, most with no written record and sometimes highly vulnerable
- Understanding and appreciating this legacy makes a core contribution to local identity and to our sense of who we are as a nation and in our communities
- A sense of place and a common cultural perspective are essential ingredients of quality of life for communities and for individual citizens
- Archaeology links people in a direct way with continuity and change in our society and our surroundings
- Like other disciplines in the historic environment, archaeology makes a major contribution to the tourist economy and to heritage-led regeneration.

NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

Nicola Powell and Tim Phillips

**Toys, Trifles and Trinkets: Base-metal miniatures from London 1200–1800**

Hazel Forsyth with Geoff Egan 2005

Unicorn Press 300pp £45

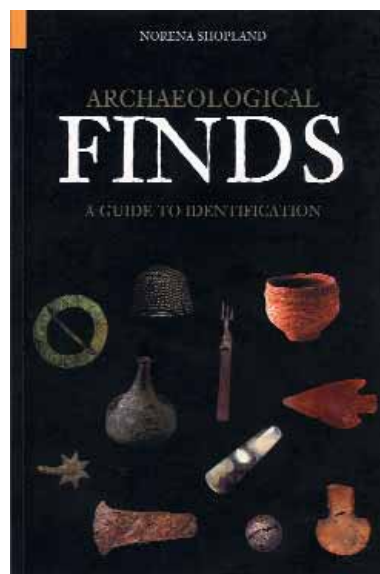
This is a visual feast for the finds researcher. The first part discusses the origins of the important collection held by the Museum of London, gathered over a hundred years from different sources. The use of metal detectors and monitoring and licensing of searchers such as the Thames Mudlarks hugely increased the collection. Indeed, one Thames Mudlark has been responsible for bringing virtually all the recent finds together in the past three decades. The word ‘toy’ is discussed in its widest terms and put into a social context. The main part of the book forms a catalogue, set out by function, starting with arms and armour. Miniature hand guns and cannons are common finds and, scarily, some show evidence of being fired. It is fully illustrated by clear pictures of the objects, illustrations (by Nick Griffiths) and often a depiction putting an object into context. Each section is accompanied by a discussion, also useful when

considering the full size objects, as indeed is the whole book. The production and use of such ‘trifles’ were not confined to the towns and cities. An increasing number are found in archaeological contexts in rural areas. This is an example of archaeology, museum and public working in harmony. An object is a research project in its own right and nowhere else is this more touchingly shown than in a book that includes playthings.

Nicola Powell



A lead alloy game hawk, with rabbit and duck. Red pigment survived on the surface



**Archaeological Finds: a guide to identification**

Norena Shopland

Tempus Publishing 2005 256pp £17.99

This is too big a subject for one slim volume. Shopland states the rationale behind the inclusion of finds in her book as related to their frequency of recovery. So why spindle whorls but no loom weights? The section on Roman pottery, particularly samian, is vast, but why no Roman glass? Surprising, as the author has experience of archaeology in inner London. And there are three pages of medieval roof tiles but no ridge tile. Conservators are concerned that a considerable

amount of the conservation and collection care advice is misleading, unclear or inaccurate. A worrying omission is shale from the section on jet. Easily mistaken, they behave differently and must receive different care.

The book starts with a discussion on materials, moving on to flint and pottery. Inexplicably, everything else is then lumped under ‘Domestic Materials’, which includes religious and ecclesiastical finds. Far better to have carried on with the discussion of finds under material, catalogued them thematically or to have discussed each chronologically, as with Adkins’ unsurpassed

*Handbook of British Archaeology*. It may be that, as with the other books reviewed here, it will always be best to discuss material culture by type, as with the excellent CBA Practical Handbooks, or by site or project, as with Egan’s specialist research on Southwark finds. And spelling mistakes such as ‘Imbrix’ (sic)? I lost sleep over that one. Typographic errors were a constant source of irritation. The inclusion of information about the Portable Antiquities Scheme (or ‘Portable Antiquities Society’ as it appears in the acknowledgments) and the Treasure Act 1996 is, however, commendable.

Nicola Powell

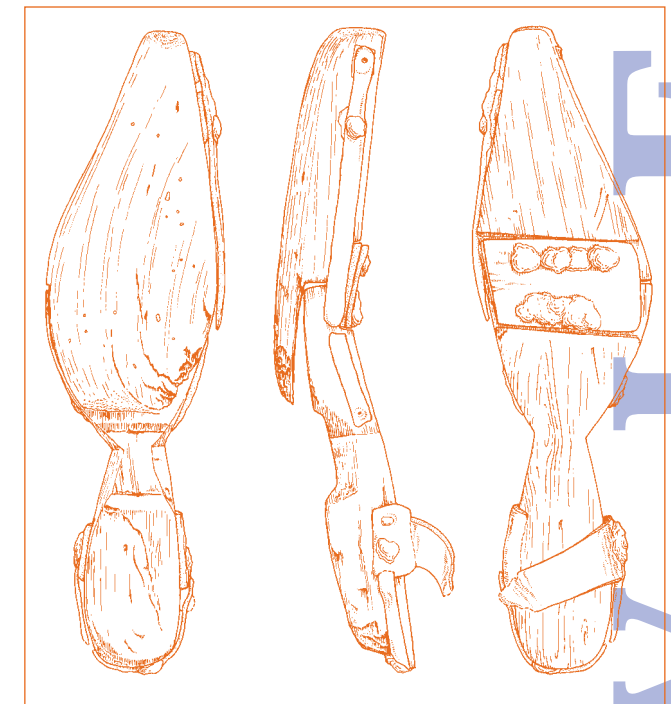
**Material culture in London in an age of transition: Tudor and Stuart period finds c 1450–c 1700**

Geoff Egan

Museum of London Archaeology Service 2005 257pp

£17.95

The second book from the Egan stable is remarkable because of the survival of everyday objects described within. The finds come from successive excavations on waterlogged sites in Southwark, and span 250 years. As with *Toys, Trifles and Trinkets*, the context and significance of the finds are discussed and the main body of the book forms an invaluable catalogue. The combination of line drawings and illustration again pull out fine details for the specialist and the finds are categorised by function. The survival of items of dress was particularly remarkable and Alison Nailer’s contribution on jerkins and shoes describes the finds and again puts them into their historical and social contexts. It is interesting to note that folk at this time were also victims to the vagaries of fashion and also daring, defying the law that forbade shoes with toes longer than two inches. This style of accessible publication



Wooden-soled pattern

is more than a reference book; it’s a good read and as such will have far reaching appeal.

Nicola Powell

**Metal Buttons c 900 BC–c AD 700**

Brian Read 2005

Portcullis Publishing 105pp £12.00

*Metal Buttons* looks at over 2500 years of use of this often unrecognised dress accessory. His earliest examples come from securely dated archaeological contexts and most are previously unpublished

finds. The buttons are catalogued chronologically, from objects that may be fasteners or purely decorative from the Late Bronze Age, through the button and loop fasteners of the Roman period, finishing with the wide variety of decorated and beautifully shaped medieval and post-medieval examples. Line drawings by Patrick Read and Nick Griffiths and photographs are accompanied by detailed analysis, and the book develops as both

corpus and reference for finders, researchers and collectors. Adding to the well-researched feel of the book *Read* supports the dating of some finds with depictions of costume in art and sculpture. The sixteenth-century depictions of angels on the ceiling of Muchelney Church, Somerset, are a marvel in their own right and the author draws our attention to the plain discoidal buttons on their Tudor costume. Surely an 'eureka' moment when he observed them!

*Read* quite rightly laments the poor standard of finds reporting in some archaeological reports, rendering them virtually useless as a research resource, and this serves as a timely reminder that archaeologists are disseminating their work to a much wider body of researchers than ever before.

Nicola Powell



Angel on the ceiling of Muchelney church, Somerset, note the buttons!

### Prehistoric Flintwork

Chris Butler 2005

Tempus Publishing 223pp £19.99

The aim of this book is to 'fill a gap' by providing a guide to the technologies and types of flint working from the Palaeolithic through to the later prehistoric period. It does this in traditional chronological order, supplemented by a chapter on Neolithic Flint Axe Production. The subject is introduced by a useful discussion of the human use of flint and common tool types, and concluded by a chapter on analysing flintwork. The inclusion of these discussions is central to the book's success, to provide a basic 'reference guide or manual to aid

the identification of worked flint'. Rather than a book of illustrated lists, Butler has produced a comprehensive guide from procurement of raw material through to the uses of the various artefact types. The enigmatic terminology of lithic analysis is explained in an understandable way, complemented by simple straightforward illustrations. Indeed, the illustrations are one of the book's strongest points, clearly illustrating the points being made in the text. Another useful addition is case studies based on excavated sites in each 'period' chapter. These make the point that lithic analysis involves more than just cataloguing individual pieces; it is about understanding an entire assemblage and relating this to the nature of an excavated site.

This is a book for the student and the amateur, and even a useful reference for the professional. Nothing is taken for granted and the author does not presume previous knowledge. This makes it an ideal resource for anyone wanting to understand both the basics and intricacies of flintwork analysis. Chris Butler is to be congratulated for producing such a readable guide.

Tim Phillips



Antler pick, with axe roughout and axe-thinning flakes from the Cissbury flint mines, Sussex

## New members

ELECTED	Member (MIFA)	Associate (AIFA)	Practitioner (PIFA)	Affiliate	Student
	Philip Bethell	Chris Adams	Niall Callan	Stephen Bradwell	Graham Aldred
	Chris Birks	Adam Brossler	Margaret Christie	Sarah Chaddock	Elizabeth Baliol-Key
	Stuart Boulter	Paul Clark	Alisdair Curtis	Michael Kershaw	Melanie Bell
	Karen Francis	Christie Cox	Susana de Sa Pinto	Lana Radloff	Daniel Brace
	Julie Franklin	John Davey	Catherine McHarg	Laura Whittock	Debbie Brookes
	Tony Howe	Alan Duffy	Samuel Meadows	John Woodall	Leigh Campetti
	Alex Llewellyn	Amanda Forster	Dudley Moore		Judith Cope-Faulkner
	Richard Lowry	Ignatius Froneman	Myra Wilkinson		Ross Dawson
	Mike Luke	Kenneth Hollamby	Paul Williamson		Matt Edmonds
	Paula Martin	Karl Hulka	Elizabeth Wormer-		Daniel Heale
	Colin Martin	Grace Jones	Pando		Miles Hutchinson
	Mike Middleton	Michael Kimber	Stephen Bradwell		Victoria Kew
	Patrick Ottaway	Matt Leivers	Sarah Chaddock		Marsali MacGregor
	Susan Ovenden	Jens Neuberger	Michael Kershaw		Neil Morris
	Philip Robertson	Roger Oram	Lana Radloff		Christine Phillips
	Jörn Schuster	Neil Phillips	Laura Whittock		Lynda Simmonds
	Nicola Smith	James Pixley	John Woodall		John Smythe
	Mark Spanjer	Chris Scurfield			Rachel Soron
	Sarah Speight	Edmund Simons			Tessa Till
	Heather Wallis				Emma Turner
					Katherine Walker
TRANSFERS	Member (MIFA)	Associate (AIFA)	Practitioner (PIFA)	Affiliate	
	Joseph Abrams	Cornelius Barton	Bryan Atkinson	Lynne Jones	
	Jennifer Ballinger	Nicholas Boldrini	Caroline Bulcock	Philip Lewis	
	Andy Jones	Michelle Collings	Richard Cramp	Richard Talbot-	
	Jayne Lawes	Joanne Cook	Ann Griffin	Jones	
	Edmund Lee	Jo Dawson	Philip Rowe		
	Roy Stephenson	Jennifer Emmett	Janet Symonds		
	Ben Stephenson	Richard Jones			
		John Lord			

### From the Chair

### Michael Dawson

*(continued from page 3)*  
continue to press for enhanced conditions for our membership both in professional practice and through the recommended pay rates. The future for the IFA and the Strategic Plan will be debated at Conference at Edinburgh in 2006.

The committees of the Institute will continue to work on the clarity of our validation process; on establishing training standards to face the challenges of the future. The committees are also at the forefront of a joint initiative, with ALGAO and IHBC, to draft a new Standard and Guidance for Stewardship of the Historic Environment. At a

time when accountability forms a significant driver for the Heritage Protection Review the Institute will continue to press for clearer guidance and greater clarity at all levels of professional practice.

The next years will be a challenge for the Institute and we shall need the support of every member in furthering the aims of the Institute, recruiting to the Institute's cause and representing the profession to government, the community and our stakeholders.

Michael Dawson  
Chair, IFA

## Members news



**Roy Stephenson** after many months of stalling has successfully achieved MIFA status. Roy has worked for the Museum of London for nineteen years, mostly as a pottery specialist, contributing to various books and articles. He is joint author of MoLAS's

first Archaeology Studies Paper *A Fourteenth-century pottery site in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey: excavations at 70-76 Eden Street* and contributed to *The Limehouse Porcelain Manufactory, Excavations at 108-116 Narrow Street, London, 1990*, with Kieron Tyler, MoLAS Monograph 6. Following a spell as Senior Project Manager of Specialist Services, Roy is currently manager of the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre, which curates, allows access to and facilitates research on the archaeological archives from the entire London region.

Roy has a strong interest in using archaeology as a tool to allow communities to interact, respond to and take a pride in their immediate environment, and believes projects such as the Shoreditch Park excavation are essential to this process. He has also been a long-standing member of IFA Council and a staunch supporter of all finds workers.

**Stephen Kemp** MIFA has recently moved from the post of Archaeologist (Development Control) with Devon County Council to join the National Environmental Assessment Service (NEAS) of the Environment Agency, based in the NEAS South Team. His role will be to assess through EIAs and

SEAs the impact of Environment Agency schemes on the archaeological resource and to engender a climate of sympathetic development within the Environment Agency to ensure that it meets its statutory duties with regard to archaeology and heritage. Stephen will be covering the Southern and Thames Regions and can be contacted on [stephen.kemp@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.kemp@environment-agency.gov.uk). The other Environment Agency Archaeologists are Phil Catherall ([philip.d.catherall@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:philip.d.catherall@environment-agency.gov.uk)) who covers Anglian, North East and North West Regions, and Ed Wilson ([ed.wilson@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:ed.wilson@environment-agency.gov.uk)) who covers Wales, Midlands and South West Regions.

**Jim Hunter** MIFA has just left CgMs Consulting and joined Hyder Consulting as their Principal Archaeologist, based in their Bristol Office. New contact details are Hyder Consulting plc, The Pithay, All Saints Street, Bristol BS1 2NL, [jim.hunter@hyderconsulting.com](mailto:jim.hunter@hyderconsulting.com). Jim has been replaced at CgMs Cheltenham by **Steve Weaver** (MIFA 2180), previously of Oxford Archaeology

Finally, by some awful omission we left **Bob Zeepvat** MIFA out of the list of members of IFA's Validation Committee in the Annual Report. Validation is probably our most hard working committee, and huge thanks are due to those who turn up at Reading for all-day meetings that carry heavy responsibility. Bob, Projects Director for Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd and who was also a long standing Council member, is still a committed and regular attendee at VC.

## CONTEXT



**Context**, the journal of The Institute of Historic Building Conservation, goes out to all IHBC members now five times a year. Keep in touch with the latest news and views and keep your finger on the pulse of professional building conservation.

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