

## **CIfA AREA AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ANNUAL REPORTS 2021**

CIfA has 21 area and special interest groups bringing together professionals with specific historic environment interests. Most groups produce regular newsletters and run training events. Groups represent specialist views to CIfA via representation on the Advisory Council and offer advice on issues which have a specific relevance to their subject/geographical area.

The Archaeological Archives, Buildings, Deutschland/Germany, Early Careers, Human Osteoarchaeology, London, Marine and Voluntary and Community have all provided annual updates on their activities. Information about all our Groups is on the CIfA website at [www.archaeologists.net/groups/about](http://www.archaeologists.net/groups/about).



## Archaeological Archives

In September 2021 we were really pleased to virtually host a series of talks postponed from our 2020 cancelled day event '*How prepared are we for the digital future?*'. It covered topics including: the creation of digital metadata, digital data flowlines, and making digital data align to the FAIR data principles. Nearly 60 people attended and we'd like to thank our speakers and to David Ingham, the group's Conference Officer, without which this would not have been possible.

Over the year the committee has been involved in a range of engagement, advisory and consultation activities. These have included

- submitting our short guide on a *career in archaeological archives* for incorporation into CifA's careers toolkit
- new representation on the OASIS Management Board
- raising our concerns with CifA about closure/funding cuts to local museums
- responding to specialist archaeological archives queries received through the group's email account. Sometimes it is preferable to respond individually to consultations, rather than as a group, which was the case for the *Archaeological archives from sterile projects* consultation.

Having agreed the questions, our (delayed) member survey '*Resourcing of staff in archaeological archives*' is currently being formatted ready for sending out to the group imminently. It will explore issues around demographics of archives teams, job specifications and role expectations (in respect to the competence matrix), management levels, and resourcing.

Since our 2021 AGM we have said goodbye to Stephen Reed (Ordinary Committee Member) whom we thank here for his contributions over the years. Helen Parslow remains as interim Chair, and we have welcomed Jess Irwin and Vikki Sands (both co-opted Ordinary Committee Members). We look forward to the upcoming elections at the 2022 AGM in September, where we hope to fill the remaining committee spaces and will also be looking for a new Treasurer.

In conjunction with the group's upcoming AGM, we are very much looking forward to hosting our next conference day – on the broad topic of *The future of archaeological archives*. It will take place on Wednesday 28 September 2022 in the historical Nottinghamshire market town, Newark-on-Trent.

For updates on the group's activities see our Facebook and Twitter pages:

[www.facebook.com/ArchaeologicalArchivesGroup/](https://www.facebook.com/ArchaeologicalArchivesGroup/)

[https://twitter.com/ifa\\_archives](https://twitter.com/ifa_archives)



## **Buildings Archaeology**

The effects of the pandemic meant that 2020-21 was a quieter year than we would have liked. As a committee, we have met on-line and considered whether and how we should update the definition of our discipline. We need to be aware that analysis of buildings can work at many scales, from 'parachuting in' to understanding places and types of buildings in their context to the forensic examination of constructional details. What is buildings archaeology, and how can we expect others to value what we do? It is a sub-topic within the wider archaeological discipline, although buildings are an integral part of how landscapes and settlements have developed since the medieval period. We use the same principles of stratigraphy, the same techniques of survey and photography, the same methods of intrusive investigation, and yet buildings archaeology is often placed on the periphery of the archaeological profession. Our role is viewed as being to record, and not to discover. Thereby our findings are rarely reported in standard archaeological media.

A major event for us, that began to explore these issues, was our session at the Cifa conference in April 2021, titled *Stuck between a rock and a hard place: defining the role of the buildings archaeologist amongst our peers and the wider conservation profession* – see <https://www.archaeologists.net/cifa2021-online-annual-conference-session-library>. Speakers Jeremy Lake and Mike Heaton, John Mabbitt of Wood Environment & Infrastructure Solutions UK and Catherine Bell of the Council for British Archaeology considered how we could broaden approaches to buildings archaeology. What came out of this was an affirmation that understanding buildings at different scales of analysis is something that buildings archaeologists can do very well but that we are constrained by time and contractual obligations to focus on the production of reports that can be improved by considering their wider context, by being critical rather than primarily descriptive and by using the understanding of fabric that we can bring to informing creative design that retains and also enhances the significance of historic buildings and places. The session concluded with consideration of both from Teagan Zoldoske of the Archaeology Data Service and Emily Hathaway of the Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology Service on research frameworks and how archaeologists can really add value and context to recording and research, and to consideration of the options for future development, consideration of landscape character and adaptation to climate change.

We followed this up with a session at the 2021 Festival of Archaeology, titled *What do buildings do for us?* Jeremy Lake, Catherine Bell and Bev Kerr presented some examples of recent work, from that with primary schools to detailed survey and thinking about buildings at a landscape scale. It was the questions posed in that session that we really want to explore in the year ahead with the membership and open a debate about the value of looking at buildings as part of the archaeology of our landscapes and places, including their role in creating habitats for wildlife. Some historic

buildings and areas are designated for their special interest, but what about the spaces and places that developed along with them, from gardens to parks and farmyards, and were shaped by them? What about the far greater number of buildings that may be considered to be historic and so meriting some consideration when places change, or indeed buildings of the recent past which are part of the unfolding story of places where we live, shop and work? How can understanding their significance, and how they have changed in response to changing needs, help to unlock new ways of thinking? These are questions on which we'd like to engage with the membership.

We have also given thought to how – within the limited time and resources that we have – we can put together information on building types and construction that adds value to initiatives such as the Historic Built Environment Knowledge Exchange (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-built-environment-knowledge-exchange-recommendations-report/histbeke-recommendations-report/>). The busyness of the last year for all of us, however, raises the issue of how this could be resourced and delivered.

We also need to think how best to build on the success of our 'Buildings Archaeology in the Pub' which were held in York, to initiate four on-line sessions per year and at least one session out the field. Church archaeology, rural buildings, town centre properties and consideration of 'levels of significance' have all been considered and we need to move forward on that too.

We are strongly aware that, with the pressures on our time that seem to have affected so many in the last two years, we need to improve means of communication with our members. Despite having a range of content 'ready to go' we have struggled to produce our newsletter and feel that the reworking of the specialist group webpages should be explored as an alternative or as a complementary means of communication. As a committee, we all have different disciplines and interests that can inform how we communicate notices of relevant publications and forthcoming events.



## Deutschland/German

As usual, the Deutschland Group (CifA-D) committee has met online on a monthly basis<sup>1</sup> and has produced a quarterly newsletter highlighting its activities to members and other interested parties. The most important milestones for the 2021-2022 year are listed below.

1. In November 2021 the CifA-D website ([www.cifa-deutschland.de](http://www.cifa-deutschland.de)) was launched. It provides all relevant information in German and promotes the work of CifA and CifA-D to a German audience
2. In the same month, the German Lohnuntergrenzen (salary benchmarks) were published. These were developed and agreed upon by the CifA-D employer and employee working groups and will be updated regularly
3. In January 2022, CifA-D was registered in Germany as an “eingetragener Verein” (e.V.), a registered association.
4. SPAU was the first German commercial company to be registered as a Registered Organisation
5. In collaboration with DGUF, CifA-D has launched a successful lecture series for archaeology students, which covers a wide range of topics and is supposed to provide students with relevant information for launching a successful career in archaeology. The lectures are held online via Zoom and will be held regularly during term time
6. On 28 May 2022 CifA-D and DGUF hosted the online conference *Das Archäologische Jahr (A year in archaeology)*, which aimed to highlight archaeological work and research carried out in Germany in 2021. The event (<https://dguf.de/tagungen/das-archaeologische-jahr>) was free to attend and open to anyone. It will be a yearly event from now on
7. On 17 June 2022, CifA-D hosted its annual conference in Frankfurt (Germany). The event focused on two topics: health and safety in archaeology and salary benchmarks. It was very well received. The conference was followed by an Archaeology Fair on 18 June, which was organised in collaboration with DGUF and NFDI4Objects. CifA-D aims to make it a regular, yearly event, though the next fair won't be until February/March 2024. This is due to feedback received from commercial archaeological companies, who noted that it would be easier for them to attend the event if it was held earlier in the year rather than in the summer
8. CifA-D has launched a regular round table for employees. It is hosted by two committee members and they meet online once a month for an informal chat to give employees a platform to get together and talk about topics that are relevant to them
9. CifA-D is supporting a campaign against the *Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz (WissZeitVG)*, a German law limiting the maximum amount of time academics can be employed on fixed-term contracts to 12 years. While the law intends for people to go into permanent employment latest at the end of that 12-year period, in reality they are often forced out of

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<sup>1</sup> A planned in person meeting in December 2021 had to be moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

academia once they can no longer be employed on temporary contracts as there are no permanent positions.



## **Early Careers Group**

The past year has seen incredible changes for the Early Careers SIG as we continue to grow as a committee but also put our goals into action. With Megan Schlanker and Tabitha Lawrence in their new roles as Chair and Secretary respectively, Jo Kirton has remained as the group's Treasurer and has maintained the group's budgets. The former secretary Claire Corkill has continued as the group's Advisory Council representative. Meg Keates as Cifa's Membership Engagement Coordinator has continually provided vital support to the SIG.

In September 2021 Mike D'Aprix and Laura May Jones were co-opted as ordinary committee members, bringing in additional academic backgrounds to the group. Sadly, in May 2022 Laura May stepped down from the committee and in the same month we gained two new ordinary committee members Sakshi Surana and Jessica Elleray. As it stands in August 2022 the committee is: Megan Schlanker (Chair), Tabitha Lawrence (Secretary), Joanne Kirton (Treasurer), Phil Pollard, Claire Corkill, Michael D'Aprix, Sakshi Surana and Jessica Elleray. The Committee would like to express their thanks to outgoing Laura May for her work within the Early Careers SIG.

## **Survey**

The committee took the decision to send out an online survey in 2021 to gain a better understanding of how they can best provide support for early career archaeologists. With enormous thanks to committee member Claire Corkill a survey and subsequent report were produced. The survey, sent out between August to November 2021, received 130 responses and gave an insight into the group's current audience, their life stages and what they would like to see in the future from the Early Careers SIG in support of them as early career archaeologists.

## **Social media**

The committee created a social media policy to work in cohesion with our expanding online audience. In the past year our Twitter following has grown 164.5% (from 169 to 447) and our Facebook community has grown by 34.75% (429 to 578), an online space now shared by almost 600 early career archaeologists and supporters! Our Instagram account, which was created in September 2021, has been a huge success, and through it we have been able to highlight the results of our survey, advertise our AGM and conference sessions, and share our *Meet the professionals* series. We are so thankful to everyone who contributed to this series, and we can't wait to share more archaeologist profiles in the coming year!

*The committee created a social media policy to work in cohesion with our expanding online audience.*

## **Conferences**

In April 2022 the Early Careers SIG opened the Cifa 2022 hybrid conference with the session *We celebrate the past to awaken the future: supporting the new generation of archaeologists*. It ran a panel session with a range of speakers covering maritime archaeology, jobseekers, and commercial training officers. The session was a success, sparking informative debate from both the audience and panel. In July 2022 the committee will hold its second CBA Festival of Archaeology Day conference

with over 15 speakers and chairs arranged into short online presentations. The topics range from ethics within archaeology and heritage to archaeological tourism.

### **CifA activities**

The group's AGM took place in February 2022 and the minutes of this can be viewed on its page on the CifA website. The committee has continued to work with CifA's Anna Welch regarding Professional Pathways, with committee members submitting their own career profiles to the recurring newsletter. A productive meeting with employability expert Jennie Robinson took place in March 2022 and encouraged the committee to openly advise on more CifA practises. Consequently, the committee has advised on new changes to the CifA ethical practises matrix and the Careers toolkit. Members Mike D'Aprix and Claire Corkill have continued to attend Advisory Council meetings on behalf of the group, providing an early careers presence. In addition to CifA the committee has built upon its links to the Council for British Archaeology and the European Association of Archaeologists Early Careers Group.

### **Conclusion**

The work, time and effort by the committee has been greatly appreciated by the Chair and Secretary, as it is a voluntary role taken on by those with full time commitments. We will continue to grow and progress as a group, in any setting whether that be an early careers conference or informal zoom meetings.



## **Human Osteoarchaeology**

### **Committee members**

Sharon Clough (Chair)

Ceri Falys (Secretary)

Clare Randall (Treasurer)

Ordinary committee members: Isobel Curwen, Heidi Dawson-Hobbis, Sabrina Ki, Matt Lee, Louise Loe and Richard Morkill

### **Membership**

The group's membership at the end of this 2021/2022 review period has increased slightly from the previous year's 304 members to 317 members. This includes 70 Hon/MCIfA, 61 ACIfA, 111 PCIfA, 31 Affiliates, 50 students, and 4 OsteoSIG only members.

### **Meetings**

The group's 2021 AGM was held on 3 November 2021 via Zoom. This year Human Osteoarchaeology Special Interest Group (OsteoSIG) celebrated its 3 year as a CIfA Special Interest Group, and as a result, all committee positions were up for election. Sadly, Kirsten Dinwiddy, who was a founding member of OsteoSIG, stepped down due to work commitments. We thank her for her hard work over the years! On a happier note, we welcomed two new Ordinary committee members, Matt Lee and Richard Morkill. All other committee members will remain in their posts for the next three-year term.

As we found last year, holding the AGM on Zoom was beneficial as it allowed a greater number of OsteoSIG members to join in and share their thoughts and opinions. Thank you to the 12 non-committee members who attended the AGM.

### **Activities**

With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions, a massive upswing in archaeological fieldwork and subsequent increase of osteoarchaeological consultations, analysis and reporting has made it a challenging year for us to get together. OsteoSIG has met informally over the year to discuss the group's 3-year plan, and has been continuing to brainstorm new and effective ways of increasing the interaction between the OsteoSIG members and committee through our social media accounts. We have also been discussing potential workshops for the future (including how to interact with the media, scientific analysis of skeletal remains, although other suggestions are welcome).

The committee were asked for their comments on several items this year, including:

- APABE's newest edition of *Science and the Dead*.



- BABAO's proposed creation of an "osteology" button on the ADS to ease searching for reports of osteoarchaeological focus - OsteoSIG were in full support.
- The addition of ethical elements to future ClfA member applications.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Evaluation Strategies (Evals 1): Understanding current practice and encouraging sector engagement. Report and Recommendations.

Whenever possible, members of the OsteoSIG committee attended other ClfA meetings, including the Advisory Council and Group Forum meetings.

### **Publications**

We are continuing to compile list of *10 things you wish diggers knew about...Osteoarchaeology* for the Diggers' Forum. To accompany this, we have also been making plans to develop these issues into online instructional materials to enhance the knowledge of those new to the practical applications of human osteoarchaeology, or who would like more information on particular topics.

### **Social media**

Over the past year, both of our social media accounts grew in numbers. The Osteo SIG Facebook group has increased to 93 followers, and our Twitter account now has a total of 436 followers. Our two social media platforms have been created to provide different services for our members. The ClfA Human Osteoarchaeology Facebook Group has continued to create a space for discussion, guidance and the sharing of knowledge. Over the next year, we hope to develop an option to offer group mentorship from the OsteoSIG committee through our Facebook group.

We also have a Twitter page (ClfA Human Osteoarch Group @OsteoSIG) where we run polls to gauge what group members want and find out a bit about them so that we can tailor our content. Twitter is also a great place to share content from other SIGs and related material in a short, snappy way.

### **If you would like to join the Osteo SIG online community:**

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OsteoSIG>

Twitter Page: <https://twitter.com/OsteoSIG>

### **The year ahead**

This year, OsteoSIG will be focusing on organizing workshops (eg how to present osteology in the media has been suggested, other topics are welcomed), and thinking about the ethical excavation and treatment of archaeological human remains with regards to the MCIfA applications. Our AGM will be held in November.



## **London Area Group**

The 2021 AGM was the first time we have attempted to combine an in person and online event which although small was an exciting development. Jacobs provided the facilities for the in person meeting and LP Archaeology provided refreshments for those present in person. Thanks are extended to David Bowsher, Laura Hampton, Richard Morkill and Claire Coger (all co-opted in 2020) who stepped down from the committee at the meeting. Chris Reade stood for Chair and Richard Morkill as OCM; both were elected. Claire Coger was subsequently co-opted again as Treasurer. Thanks are also extended to two Advisors, Rob Whytehead and Amanda Wintcher who have supported the committee through the year. AGM was followed by an informal discussion session.

### **Representing London Archaeologists**

Our regular activities include representing our members by contributing to discussions and issues wherever there is a London angle. We were pleased to help GLAAS (CifA Registered Organisation) identify London archaeologists able to support their guidance development. The London group committee is always seeking the views and concerns of our members and continued to represent these through our representative at Advisory Council over 21/22.

### **Ordinary Meetings of the LAG**

New for this year, we introduced a programme of regular Ordinary Meetings throughout the year. These are intended to provide a regular space to network and to discuss topics of relevance to the membership, and where appropriate be shared on-line. Three have been held to date with the fourth is scheduled (6 December 2022) after the AGM in October.

In March Iceni hosted the first event at their offices - including very generous refreshments - which featured a talk by Sandy Kidd (GLAAS) on the London *Urban archaeological database project*, followed by a discussion of the introduction of assessment of ethical competence within accreditation applications.

May included a talk by Ben Raine (contaminated land specialist and principal consultant at Wood) on contaminated land and archaeology in London, followed this time by a group discussion on re-visiting Chartered Archaeologists status.

August features a walking tour of Roman Southwark by Chris Constable (Southwark Borough Council) ending in a pub and a group discussion on *what the London Area Group can do to be more relevant to you?*.

### **CPeasyD**

Our CPeasyD sessions have dropped off this year but have not been abandoned. These events have been sponsored by a range of organisations 'in the business' in London and several topics - and sponsors - are in the pipeline.

### **AGM 2022**

This year's AGM will be an in person / hybrid event in October and to support this we are inviting a

panel of archaeologists to reflect on the role, impact and significance climate change issues play in their work.



## **Marine Archaeology**

Over the last year, the Marine Archaeology Group (MASIG) has continued to hold committee meetings virtually. We would like to thank Danielle Wilkinson for her time and contributions as Chair, and Diana Donohue and Michael Walsh for their input to MASIG as committee members. We would also like to thank Toby Gane for his time as an advisor to the committee. Christian Dalton was successfully co-opted as an ordinary committee member and is currently acting as interim Chair, until the next AGM in September 2022.

### **Committee and membership**

The committee members are as follows:

Christian Dalton (interim Chair, until the upcoming AGM), 2  
Stephanie Said (Secretary),  
Alison James (Treasurer),  
Phoebe Ronn, Hefin Maera, Paolo Croce, George Stewart-Phillips and Jezz Davies.  
Victoria Cooper remains as an advisor.

Our current membership is 370 in total with the majority formed by MCIfA and PCIfA members.

### **Group completed and forthcoming activities**

Over the past year we have:

- Provided consultation for CIfA S&G for field Evaluation and Watching Brief;
- Submitted 10 things Marine Archaeologists wished Diggers knew (Digger's Forum);
- Currently undertaking consultation for CIfA S&G for nautical archaeology recording and reconstruction; and
- Currently providing consultation on the Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives relevant to Marine Project and Marine Finds.

Additional group aims for the 2022-2023 year include:

- Continued involvement in consultations and advocacy
- Generating content for social media and newsletters
- Providing guidance information on the MASIG website
- Discussion on potential activity(s) for 2023 celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Protection of Wrecks Act 197



## **Voluntary and Community**

This year has been a very busy year for the Voluntary and Community SIG and an incredible amount has been achieved by the different members of the steering group.

A project proposal *Developing a suite of guidance tools to support the promotion and delivery of community engagement in archaeology* was produced and submitted to Historic England for funding consideration. We were very pleased to receive the funding and the project has now been tendered by CifA. The project should begin in September. This is a big achievement for the SIG as it was one of the main actions from a meeting that took place with CBA and other organisations before Covid-19.

A second very important piece of work was the undertaking of a survey of local authority archaeological planning advisors to understand better the current situation in terms of the extent, scope and perceived value of community engagement taking place within the context of planning led investigations. This report was promoted at the CifA Bath 2022 conference and disseminated through CifA and ALGAO national committee. An article was also written by Clem Cooper and Nina O'Hare for *The Archaeologist* and the results formed part of a digital morning chat.

The publication of the report coincided with the CifA conference in Bath and the SIG ran a session as part of the public benefit stream promoting the local authority report and the competency matrix that was launched the year before. It was a very well received session.

The SIG has also been involved in the CifA digital morning tea chats – including the session *Seeing is believing – a call for public engagement in our everyday work*.

Finally, the SIG has also reviewed its aims and purpose and is submitting some changes to the board in the Autumn.