

Incorporating
Conservation News

NEWS LETTER

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Council for
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Marking 100 Years of Protecting the Past



Two of the Act's major innovations – the preservation order and scheduling – established the statutory protection of those parts of the nation's heritage in private hands. It would develop in future years through the listing system and a rapidly evolving planning system. For nearly 70 years the CBA has itself played an important role in this unfolding story of conservation.

Today we have a strong established voice in supporting the protection of the historic environment which would not have been achieved without this Act. Working with partner organisations, we aim to maximise the protection of the UK's historic environment by continuing to influence public policy and legislative reform. Through our casework activity we are also involved locally. Almost 4,500 listed building applications from England and Wales are sent to us each year for response and advice and we are increasingly involved in specific campaign cases.

A series of exhibitions at London's Wellington Arch, a BBC4 television series and a new book will mark the anniversary. Running until 21 April an exhibition within Wellington Arch's Quadriga Gallery traces the founding days of archaeology and its pioneers who strove to rescue Britain's great prehistoric sites from destruction.

The centenary year will culminate with the completion of two major projects – the repair and restoration of Kenwood House and the long awaited



Stonehenge from the air
Copyright: English Heritage Archives



Rare Victorian painting currently on display at Wellington Arch

improvements at Stonehenge. At Stonehenge the closure of the A344 will reconnect the stones with their wider landscape and a new interpretation and visitor centre will tell the story of our most famous ancient monument.

If you want to find out more check out www.english-heritage.org.uk/caring/heritage-centenary

Pictured on the front cover:
The Devil's Den in Wiltshire, c.1865 - one of the monuments included on the list in the 1882 Ancient Monuments Act.

A hundred years ago, the government recognised the State's duty to protect the physical remains of its history, even when the remains were in private ownership.

The Ancient Monuments Consolidation and Amendment Act of 1913 was a landmark moment – it created many of the powers still used to safeguard the nation's legacy of historic buildings and ancient monuments.

The Act also effectively established the National Heritage Collection, Britain's outdoor museum today consisting of 880 historic sites and now in the care of English Heritage, Cadw and Historic Scotland. This is a remarkable collection spanning 5,000 years from prehistoric stone circles to a 1960s Cold War Bunker and includes Stonehenge and Hadrian's Wall.

VOLUNTEER STORIES

Alex lives in Swindon, Wiltshire. He grew up with a passion for archaeology and currently works for Cotswold Archaeology, which is based near Cirencester, Gloucestershire. He works all over the country particularly in the South West, and usually in the mud and the rain!



Do you feel inspired by archaeology and would like to get involved with young people? Alex Thomson is one of 600 volunteers across the UK working with the Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC). Here he talks to us about the rewards and challenges of volunteering.

"My name is Alex Thomson and I volunteer as an Assistant Leader for the North Wiltshire branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club. This is an incredibly rewarding experience, but it takes hard graft to ensure everything runs smoothly. From the planning



butter churning Bronze Age style

stages to the actual running of monthly meetings, the volunteer team need to be inventive and imaginative to deliver interesting and stimulating activities for the Young Archaeologists, but that's no problem because we are so passionate about archaeology and heritage!

We spend a lot of time on planning processes. Firstly, the activities we provide need to be engaging and educational, fun and enjoyable - challenging for the older children and easy to follow for our younger members. Secondly, we need to consider safety requirements, by carrying out risk assessments to cover simple concerns like paper cuts through to more serious fire escape strategies.

The smooth running of our monthly sessions benefits hugely from our hard work prior to the meetings. We often take time out of our busy schedules



to make props (like cardboard cut-out English Civil War hats!) and assemble equipment for the Young Archaeologists to use to enrich their whole experience. During one session, for example, we looked at the tools and methods that may have been used in everyday activities throughout Prehistory. We provided the children with stripped Christmas tree tips to whisk cream into butter, Bronze Age style, as one of the more unusual activities. Our YAC meetings just wouldn't be the same without some of our brilliantly made kit!

The Young Archaeologists' Club is a great way for children interested in archaeology and history to learn more in a fun and informal environment.

I am a professional archaeologist and it is brilliant to know that groups, with dedicated leadership teams, are nurturing the interests of archaeologists and historians of the future."

Want to find out more? If you want to become involved as a volunteer leader please contact us at yac@archaeologyuk.org

CONSERVATION NEWS

LIFTING THE LID ON BIRMINGHAM'S COFFIN WORKS

Jon Wright, CBA Head of Conservation, reports on future plans for a remarkable coffin fitting factory with royal connections.

CBA casework often focuses on industrial buildings of one kind or another and we work very closely with the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA) to make sure we get the expert view, particularly when the site has extant pieces of machinery or hardware that allow obsolete industrial processes to still be read. This is quite rare of course, so factory buildings that retain machinery and evidence of the manufacturing process are rightly considered important pieces of our collective history. These kinds of sites can tell us much about the daily lives, conditions and social frameworks of the people that worked in them and be important focal points for tourism, education and community engagement.

Whilst not, then, a common kind of factory, the Newman Brothers' Coffin Fitting Works in Fleet St, Birmingham is a remarkable survival. Built between 1892 and 1894 in what was the famous Jewellery Quarter of England's 'second city', the factory manufactured coffin furniture for just over 100 years. During its time, the factory employed 100 people and produced coffin handles, plates and other ephemera in thousands of separate designs, sending them out to undertakers all over the country for fitting. The firm were very highly regarded and produced fittings for the coffins of amongst others, Winston Churchill, Neville Chamberlain, The



Inside Newman Brothers' Coffin Fitting Works, Birmingham

Queen Mother and Diana, Princess of Wales.

The factory was housed in a range of moderate, but handsome buildings. After closing its doors for the last time in 1999, the site lay empty. English Heritage was quick to spot the potential importance of the site and listed it Grade II*. The CBA voiced concerns at the time and have continued to take an interest in the future of the building. Now, after years of negotiation, the factory has received funding to be turned into the country's only funereal museum. This success story is the direct result of the vision of the Birmingham Conservation Trust, which has been active since 1978, preserving buildings in Birmingham and giving them new leases of life. For the first time the Trust are looking to take on an active role managing a site and have come up with a number of ways to ensure its viability. Some of the internal

spaces will be rented to small, community businesses, whilst the main areas of the factory will house the industrial machinery, display areas and office spaces that will allow visitors to learn about the manufacturing process, the vast range of products and the people who made them. It has already been popular, not surprisingly candlelit Halloween trips were sold out way in advance.

The Coffin Works is set to open its doors to the public in 2015 and you can find out more about the factory and its fascinating history through the Birmingham Conservation Trust website at www.birminghamconservationtrust.org or by phoning 0121 303 2664

Grave Futures

Jon Wright reports on CBA conservation activity in Exeter - working with locals, the council and a site owner to find a successful future for its Dissenters' Graveyard.

Dissenters is the collective term for Christians whose religious beliefs fell outside the orthodoxy of the Church of England. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Roman Catholics, Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists and a wide variety of other Nonconformists were barred from a wide range of activities controlled by the church. The reason many members of these religions went into trades, for example, is because they were barred from entering university. As it was in life, so it was in death, and dissenters were usually barred from established graveyards and burial grounds. Exeter's Dissenters' Graveyard was established in 1747 by the Unitarians and their fine chapel, George's Meeting House, named after King George III, still stands and is now a pub. Unfortunately, time has not

been so kind to the graveyard and for decades it has lain derelict and overgrown, a largely forgotten but important part of Exeter's social and religious history.

In 2010, a local businessman bought the graveyard, commissioned an archaeological survey and began to think about the potential for developing the site for a social housing project. However, Exeter City Council indicated that justifying such a development would be almost impossible and many local people agreed. Unfortunately, neither the council or anyone else had an alternative solution to save, preserve or reuse the site, so the saga continued. In 2012, the owner contacted the CBA, asking for assistance and seeking advice on the archaeological implications of development. After visiting the site, we advised that development would be difficult and costly, particularly as regards exhumation and we suggested that the owner should think about gifting the plot to an organisation which could care for it, turning it into a public space



and opening it up to the adjacent Bull Meadow Park. Graciously, the owner has agreed to explore this idea and the CBA are now working closely with him, Exeter City Council and our regional partners to explore the options.

It is early days, but we are hopeful that we can help to bring back the graveyard as a public space that could become part of the city's tourist trail and an educational resource for local history projects. The CBA excels as a national body connecting with what is important to local people. The graveyard has a fascinating story to tell about the 'secret' history of Exeter and we will be working hard to make sure that that story is told.



TONY BLACKMAN MEMORIAL LECTURE 2013



Tony Blackman

To commemorate the life of Cornwall's celebrated and much-loved archaeologist, Tony Blackman, CBA South West launched the annual Tony Blackman Memorial Lecture at Bristol University in January.

The presenter was Pete Herring of English Heritage, Tony's long-time colleague and friend, who shared some of the highlights of Tony's life and legacy.

"Many people come to archaeology in retirement and joining a local society or community group offers enthusiasts with a passion for archaeology, like Tony, a way in.

Tony was a great supporter and active member of local societies in Cornwall, ending his life as President of the Cornwall Archaeological Society, the first who was neither a professional nor an academic archaeologist, and Chairman of the Cornwall Heritage Trust.

You could say that Tony was a community archaeologist before that term was invented, working out various ways of engaging his local community in research, recording and conservation. His community involvement led in time to his being elected first a trustee and eventually an Honorary Vice President of the CBA, as well as a member of the YAC national advisory group.

I believe there are no such things as amateur archaeologists, just more or less effective archaeologists. And Tony was an example of a highly effective archaeologist, one of the best I have known. He started with no formal qualifications or training, but a passion and a natural skill at observing, questioning and analysing remains, and a rapidly developing understanding of the Cornish historic landscape.

Most dramatically Tony revolutionised our understanding of the practice and archaeological remains left by the harvesting of moorland fuel and was also a pioneer in the recognition and

recording of a new monument type, the propped stones, probably of Neolithic date.

Tony knew that he could use his skills as a teacher and headmaster to instil some of his enthusiasm for Cornwall's past in young children. He started the Cornwall YAC branch in 1993 undertaking a wide range of fieldwork as well as enjoying numerous carefully planned events. Many members of Cornwall YAC have gone on to take degrees in archaeology and are now archaeologists.

As we all know, archaeology is a social activity. Tony believed that we develop ourselves as people by looking at the past and sharing our understanding of it with others. He brought the personal to archaeology - demonstrating learning through experiencing and giving adults, as well as children, the opportunity to experience what past people may have felt.

With the help of his friends Graham and Lizzie Lawrence, his YAC branch and others, he reconstructed three prehistoric round houses at Trewortha on Bodmin Moor, arranging a variety of activities to take place there: flint-knapping, weaving, preparing and cooking foods that would have been enjoyed in prehistory, even smelting tin and copper and casting axes and swords. We are hoping to restore one of these roundhouses as a memorial to Tony.

Through his life and his lasting legacy, Tony was the embodiment of what the CBA is all about - how the past belongs to everyone and how everyone can make an impact on our understanding of it."

Caradoc Peters, CBA South West Chair added, "Tony was an inspiration in the way he brought young and old together to discover new things about the past. He proved that you don't have to be a professor to achieve new knowledge."

A twist in the tail - the story of the Black Mixen Pool Wreck

Over a cold weekend in March, a hardy group of volunteers came together for an intertidal archaeology training event in the village of Lawrenny, Pembrokeshire, South Wales.

The two day 'Hulk Recording Training Event' was to survey the wreck of a vessel in a site called the Black Mixen Pool, the remains of which were submerged daily on mud flats. Twelve volunteers, with warm clothing and wellington boots, were involved in the event, organised by CBA Community Archaeology bursary holder Ed Davies of Dyfed Archaeological Trust and led by Ian Cundy and Bill Turner of the Nautical Archaeology Society.

On Saturday morning a classroom recording lesson was followed by a trip to the site and time spent removing the covering of seaweed, which was essential before survey work could begin. The first survey recording session took place in the early afternoon before the wreck became submerged. The port side of the boat had collapsed and the group was able to start a 2D survey with metre square planning frame matrices. Back in the village hall the students plotted their data and drawings onto a grid which was also transferred into digital form. A finds identification session followed with various items from the wreck of HMS Invincible which sank in the Solent in 1759.

On Sunday the classroom session centred on identification of features and construction methods and this



Volunteers with the remains of The Helping Hand'

knowledge was then applied on site. Further survey work was conducted in late morning and early afternoon, particularly at the bow end. Later on volunteers and many villagers gathered in the hall to see the results of the work and to learn of the background story previously gathered by Ian and Bill.

The vessel was constructed in Lowestoft in 1921 as a sailing trawler, named The Helping Hand. Twelve years later the boat was fitted with an engine which is still clearly visible on the wreck. In World War II it was converted into a minesweeper, before ending its days after the war as an insurance write-off following an engine fire. In 1968 a Mr John Radcliffe purchased her and towed her to Lawrenny for repair. He tried to make her seaworthy by plugging holes with concrete and sheets of plastic and using pulleys to move her further out of the water. The concrete and some of the plastic is still visible today.

Participants were introduced to the step-son of John Radcliffe, Stefan Conrad Proszynski. As a 17 year old, Stefan returned home after travels to

Morocco to find a note saying that his family had moved to London! He considered whether the vessel could serve as a houseboat, but realised that she was too far gone to be serviceable - even with the plastic plugs. In later years she rolled over onto her starboard side which resulted in the twisting of her tail which can be seen today. Stefan retained his love of boats and is now a ship-wright.

Results of the research and survey will be sent to the local Heritage Environment Record, maintained by Dyfed Archaeological Trust. The volunteers have new skills and the villagers of Lawrenny also have a new understanding and affection for the Black Mixen Pool Wreck.

The weekend, organised by Dyfed Archaeological Trust and funded by Cadw, is part of a package of volunteer training activities organised by partner bodies on behalf of CBA.

Background picture:
The wreck of the Black Mixen Pool in Pembrokeshire, Wales.

Copyright Kieth Williams
(Lawrenny Yacht Club) 1968

Europe's Lost World

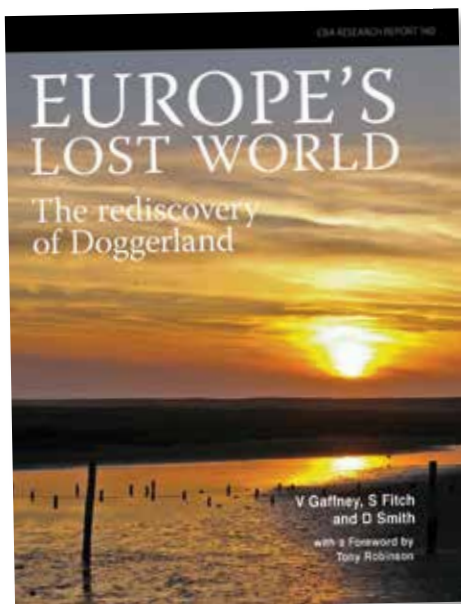
Back by popular demand this award-winning book, *Europe's Lost World: The rediscovery of Doggerland*, concluded a remarkable programme of archaeological research into the enigmatic country which once linked the Yorkshire coast with a stretch of Continental Europe from Denmark to Normandy and which now lies beneath the North Sea.

The past is sometimes said to be a foreign country, but less than 12,000 years ago Europe was a very different place where Britain did not exist as a separate land. Over several thousand years the climate changed, sea levels rose and the entire coast of Europe morphed into the familiar shape we know today. Britain, formerly a range of hills on the edge of a great plain, gradually separated from continental Europe.

Ten thousand years ago Doggerland was an inhabited land where communities of hunter-gatherers lived and roamed, hunting and gathering resources, just as they did in many other areas of northern Europe. Previously interpreted by archaeologists simply as a 'land bridge', this project has described this amazing landscape in detail and revealed the valleys, hills, rivers and plains which lie beneath the North sea and which were home to unique cultures, tribes and, perhaps, thousands of people.

This book also documents the terrible events which brought an end to this landscape. Sometimes slowly, but sometimes with a rapidity which brings to mind Noah's Flood as sea levels rose due to a rise in temperature and melting glaciers. Doggerland was drowned, its people lost or driven to higher ground. The project team, headed by Professor Vince Gaffney, a specialist in landscape archaeology, conducted the research using ground-breaking oil industry technology and 3D seismic reflection data to scan the seabed. Using millions of data points across 23,000km² of the sea bed, a reconstruction was created of the old land surface, now submerged beneath metres of marine sediment and sea water.

To purchase this book, visit www.archaeologyUK.org/books-and-publications



ICE AGE ART AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Private View 10 May 2013

This is an exhibition that all archaeologists will want to see! You can enjoy a private view of the Ice Age Art exhibition at the British Museum, followed by a lecture by the exhibition curator, Deputy Keeper of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic material, Jill Cook. The exhibition view starts at 9.00 am and the lecture starts at 10.30 am. You can read the article about this exhibition in the last issue of *British Archaeology* magazine (March/April 2013). To find out more and to book a visit go to new.archaeologyuk.org/events/ice-age-art-exhibition-talk



From ice age reindeer (carved on a reindeer foot bone from La Madeleine, France) on exhibition at the British Museum

READERS' SURVEY

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