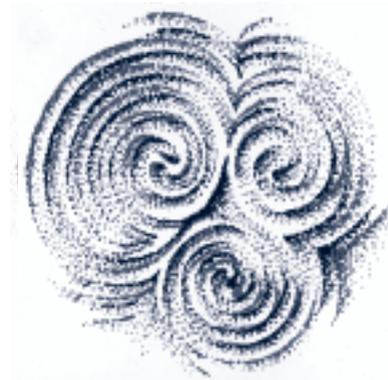


PAST



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PREHISTORIC SOCIETY

Registered Office University College London, Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY

<http://www.prehistoricsociety.org/>

FROM BEAKERS TO DAGGERS: BRONZE AGE BURIAL PRACTICE AT FORTEVIOT

Ever since the cropmarks of a huge Neolithic palisaded enclosure and several henge monuments were recorded from the air by J. K. St Joseph in the 1970s, Forteviot, near Perth in central Scotland, has been regarded as one of the most significant Neolithic ceremonial landscapes in northern Britain, yet it remained unexplored until 2007. The cropmark evidence came on top of a long literary and historical tradition that Forteviot was also an Early Medieval Pictish royal centre, where Kenneth

mac Alpin, an early king of a united Scotland, died at his palace in AD 858. The Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot (SERF) Project is attempting to make sense of these two great periods of flourishing of Forteviot, and to track the later history of a place which is now a sleepy village. This short piece focuses on a tighter timespan, highlighting the recent exciting evidence that the SERF project has uncovered for a diverse range of Bronze Age burial and other activities at Forteviot, which shows this was an important Bronze Age ceremonial complex as well as being a key Neolithic monumental landscape.

The cropmarks at Forteviot suggest that the main focus of the prehistoric monument complex was a huge palisaded enclosure dating to *c.* 2700-2500 cal



The Forteviot dagger at the end of the conservation process

The copy date for PAST 68 is 1 June 2011. Contributions to Joanna Brück, School of Archaeology, Newman Building, University College Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4, Ireland. Email: joanna.bruck@ucd.ie Contributions on disc or as e-mail attachments are preferred (either word or rtf files) but hardcopy is also accepted. Illustrations can be sent as drawings, slides, prints, tif or jpeg files. The book reviews editor is Dr Mike Allen, Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wilts, SP4 6EB. Email: aea.escargots@gmail.com Queries over subscriptions and membership should go to the Society administrator Tessa Machling at the London address above.

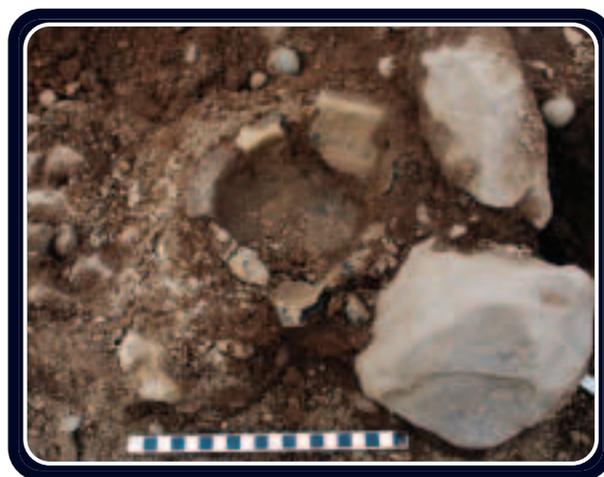
BC, some 265m across, defined by large postholes, and with a narrow entrance avenue on its northern side. Within this enclosure, at least one henge has been identified, surrounded by a timber circle, with a smaller timber circle and hengiform nearby.

Outside the palisaded enclosure, on its northern side, cropmarks have revealed two further henges, and a double-ditched circular enclosure. Four seasons of excavation on the prehistoric elements at Forteviot (2007-2010) have focused on the boundary and avenue of the palisaded enclosure, the large henge and timber circle within the palisaded enclosure, one of the two henges to the north, and the double-ditched enclosure. This work has already revealed a wealth of information about the development of this complex, which seems to have had its origins as a Late Neolithic cremation cemetery established around 3000-2800 cal BC. The vicinity of this cemetery became, over the course of the next 1000 years, a heavily monumentalised place, with the construction of a series of timber and earthwork enclosures of different forms and scale. Towards the end of the third millennium BC the funerary character of this complex was firmly re-established with the placement of a spectacular dagger burial, yet this is only one of a number of Bronze Age funerary deposits representing a series of different traditions of burial that have been revealed, indicating that the significance of this place extended well into the later third millennium BC.

Perhaps the most notable and grandest of the Bronze Age activity identified at Forteviot so far was the dagger grave placed within a large cist within the henge that sat at the heart of the palisaded enclosure. The cist was monumental, defined by sandstone slabs, with a massive 4 tonne capstone that had an unusual rock art motif set face down over the burial. No bones or teeth were found within the cist, but phosphate and other geochemical analyses suggest a body had been placed inside it but had rapidly decayed. Radiocarbon dating and Bayesian modelling suggest the burial took place between 2140 and 2040 cal BC. Placed with the burial were a remarkable series of grave goods including a dagger of Butterwick type. Parts of the dagger's organic coverings survived and the dagger itself was an amazing amalgam of various materials, notably a bone pommel with wooden pins driven through it, held together by a gold hilt band and covered by a sheepskin sheath and perhaps wrapped in another material. Also placed with the body seems to have been some kind of leather bag, containing a small broken knife and a fire-making kit (flint strike-a-light, iron ore and possible tinder). Overlying this 'bag' was a bunch of meadowsweet flowers, including stems, thousands of pollen grains, leaves and – most remarkably of all – intact tiny flower heads. Wooden objects, including a fragment of

willow bowl, were found within the cist and work is ongoing on the analysis of the cist contents and on the taphonomic processes that led to such remarkable and unusual preservation conditions. The cist itself appears to have been covered by a cairn of split basalt and river cobbles, marking its location within the southern half of the earlier henge in which it had been placed.

By the time the cist was constructed, the palisaded enclosure may already have been in a ruinous state, characterised by decayed stumps of timbers, but the enclosure may also have had an earthwork element which may have contributed to its continuing significance; certainly there appear to be contrasts between the Bronze Age activity inside and outside of the enclosure. Apart from the spectacular contents of the dagger grave, only a handful of Beaker pottery sherds were found in the interior henge, but outside of the palisaded enclosure much greater levels of Bronze Age deposition appear to have occurred. Excavations in 2010 targeted one of the exterior henges and the double-ditched enclosure. Here, the henge-type enclosure, defined by a wide and deep ditch, was associated with a complete AOC beaker pot found smashed at the base of a ditch terminal. Inside the enclosure, some form of rectangular timber structure appears to have been decommissioned in association with the deposition of further AOC Beaker pots. At a later phase of use, the henge seems to have been converted into an enclosed space, with the entrance causeway dug out. This may have coincided with the deposition of a cremation burial which was placed in a small pit near the centre of the monument. This was accompanied by a unique Food Vessel bowl, set within a small improvised cist of small flat stones set on their side, with the contents placed on a bed of pebbles. A barrow may have covered this cremation burial, although this is difficult to establish due to later disturbance of the henge/barrow.



The Food Vessel burial within the henge / barrow, excavated in 2010

Excavations revealed yet another type of Bronze Age burial in the heart of the double-ditched enclosure, which was shown to be defined by a double palisade that may have had a large standing stone set at one entrance. In this case, burial activity focused on a very unusual triple cist with a central rectangular cist sharing its side slabs with D-shaped cists on either side. As with the dagger cist, no traces of bone or tooth were found in these cists, although the ghost of a body outline was identified within one of the compartments. Grave goods within these cists were few, and comprised a small number of lithic tools including an arrowhead. A large pit beside this triple cist contained a whole, but smashed, Beaker.



The triple cist found within the double-ditched enclosure in 2010

At almost every location we have examined in relation to the Neolithic palisaded enclosure, Bronze Age activity has been detected including the deposition of a range of cremation and inhumation deposits, huge cists and improvised cists, cairns and mounds, pottery and metalwork. They point to moments of private ceremony amidst and just outside the ruins of earlier enclosures. Until we get radiocarbon dates from the 2010 season, it is difficult to tease out the sequence of these burials. However, it is tempting to view these difficult expressions of burial tradition as representing visitors to this place carrying out funerary ceremonies and leaving again, rather than a single social group who lived in the vicinity. The contrasts here between grand and low-key, within and outside the palisaded enclosure, suggest that such burials were situated in a rule-bound manner and provisional phasing suggests the focus of Bronze Age deposition began outside the palisaded enclosure and gradually moved into the heart of the complex. The full story is, however, yet to be revealed. As we continue to work on these burials during the post-excavation analysis, we hope to reveal more of the complexity of Bronze Age Forteviot.

For more information, see Driscoll, S., Brophy, K. & Noble, G. 2010. *The Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot project (SERF)*, www.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/driscoll323/

Kenneth Brophy and Gordon Noble

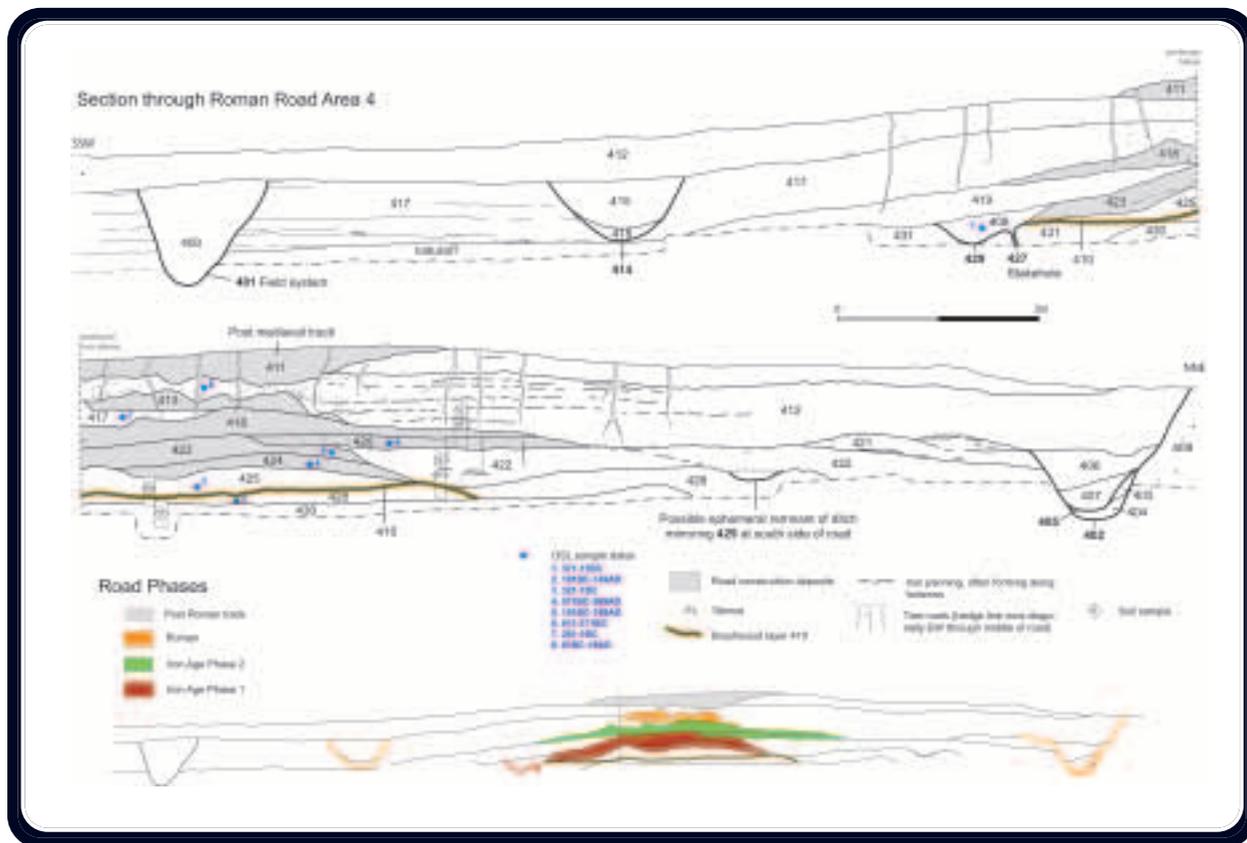
WHEN IS A 'ROMAN' ROAD ROMAN? AN IRON AGE ENGINEERED ROAD AT SHARPSTONE HILL, BAYSTON, SHROPSHIRE

During the summer of 2009, SLR Consulting with Gerry Martin Associates undertook a programme of investigation on behalf of Tarmac during expansion of their hard conglomerate greywacke sandstone quarry at Sharpstone Hill, Bayston, south of Shrewsbury.

A routeway (sometimes called the Portway) is believed to have followed the ridge along Sharpstone Hill, perhaps connecting the hillforts at Haughmond Hill and Ebury to the northeast with the Burgs at Bayston, before continuing southwest to the Long Mynd and beyond. From the ridge at Sharpstone, long southward views allow other hill forts to be seen, such as Caer Caradoc at Church Stretton, and to the north the area covered by modern Shrewsbury is clearly visible. To the east the hulking mass of the Wrekin and its hillfort rises spectacularly out of the Midland Plain, and in this direction also lies Wroxeter Roman town, on the eastern side of the Severn. A Roman road has long been described as running from the Severn at Wroxeter in a northwesterly direction, before heading west and southwest to Caersws in Wales (Margary route 64). Three historic parishes met in the area where this road crossed the Portway at Sharpstone Hill, and it was a 400m length of road at this location that formed the focus of our investigations.

In Britain, major Roman roads are characterized by the way in which they were surveyed and constructed as carefully planned and engineered all-weather roads, initially designed for military and administrative purposes. The principal features that are often associated with Roman roads are their use of straight lengths and directness towards a destination, a consolidated embanked and cambered central core of earth, puddle chalk or stones (the *agger*), which was then surfaced with compacted stone or gravel, and this roadway was set within a wider zone often demarcated by ditches, sometimes for drainage purposes, and sometimes created as borrow pits for the construction of the *agger*.

Although much of the 400m length of road had been badly eroded, our investigations at Sharpstone Hill identified one particular section that had survived remarkably intact within a depression in the landform. Lying beneath a post-Roman trackway, four phases of metalled road surface were recorded, constructed on consolidated earth and pebble cores, cambered for drainage purposes and with brushwood foundations. Gullies and stake-holes defined the edge of some road phases. In addition, shallow ditches were traced running parallel on either side, as well as



pits and possible field-system ditches from earlier phases. The minimal artefactual material (only some coins and Romano-British ceramics high up in the sequence) seemingly confirmed the evidence from the second century AD Meole Brace settlement north of Sharpstone Hill to which the road was heading.

Our research aims were much more ambitious than to be content merely with finding the remains and recording evidence for construction of the road. The plan was to deploy a suite of scientific techniques rarely used in Roman archaeology, to increase understanding of the chronological development and environmental context of the road, and to further the interpretation of the curious and illogical route that the Roman road was believed to follow. Samples were therefore taken vertically throughout the sequence so that OSL dating could be attempted of the sediments by Jean-Luc Schwenninger and David Peat. In addition, samples of the brushwood foundations, and of charcoal from pits, were sent to Strathclyde University for radiocarbon dating. Birmingham Archaeo-Environmental investigated the pre-road environmental context, and Richard Macphail was asked to examine the micromorphology of the road sequence and the inter-related colluvial deposits. Peter Marshall has completed the scientific analyses through Bayesian modelling of the combined radiocarbon and OSL dating in relation to the stratigraphic sequence so that the chronology of the main events could be refined.

This suite of techniques has delivered an unambiguous Iron Age date for construction of the first three phases of the road, with only the uppermost metallised surface being of possible Roman date. However, even this is 82% likely to have been constructed during the Late Iron Age, and the origins of the route might have been very much earlier. Charcoal, burnt sand and stones suggest that the old ground surface was cleared by fire, and micromorphological analysis revealed churning of wet mud with calcitic dung (faecal spherulites), showing initial use of the route as a track for livestock. A 4.5m wide layer of elder brushwood laid over this deposit may have been an attempt to consolidate the route over a zone that had become wet, and the lack of breakage of the branches suggests that earth was quickly placed over the top. This deposit showed similar micromorphological evidence to the deposit below the brushwood, and we have therefore interpreted it as redeposited material used as the foundation (together with the brushwood) for the first phase of road construction. The surface of this road comprised two layers: a lower level of gravel and small stones in a matrix of silty sand with an upper deposit of river cobbles compacted into it. This created a *c.* 5m wide all-weather roadway of hard material, embanked above the surrounding ground surface to *c.* 0.5m in the centre, with both deposits having been carefully cambered down on either side to help with drainage. The downhill southern side had been kerbed by a gully which contained a row of stakes.

This pattern of construction was seen to have been followed in successive phases so that the road rose to over 1m in height and over 7m in width, with the final phase, of Late Iron Age or possibly Roman conquest period date, being more a phase of repair for wheel ruts rather than a full rebuilding of the road. The river cobbles that had been used for each of the road surfaces were not of very local origin, and must have been imported some distance, perhaps from the Severn itself over three kilometres away, presumably as an easier source material than quarrying the hard sandstone of the hill itself.

Peter Marshall's Bayesian modelling has suggested that at 95% probability the first phase of the Iron Age droveway falls in the period 200-5 cal BC, with the successive road constructions at 125 cal BC-cal AD 35, 110 cal BC-cal AD 70, and 105 cal BC-cal AD 105 for the final phase: i.e. an 82% probability that this last event was also Iron Age rather than Roman. The radiocarbon dating for one pit found beneath the line of the road, and for other pits surrounding it, are Bronze Age (three dates with a maximum range of 1740-1120 cal BC derived from oak, ash, birch, alder and hazel charcoal). The pit beneath the road was found at the point where the three historic parishes met, and had been cut to accommodate a substantial post *c.* 0.7m diameter. The interpretation we place upon this, combined with the micromorphological evidence for animal dung and trampling, is that this may have acted as a marker post, and that the road's origins might lie in a Bronze Age droveway that extended over the hill, within a landscape already identified as containing occupation and funerary remains from the period.

What are the implications of this analysis?

Evidence for well-engineered and carefully surveyed roads reaching back through the Iron Age into the Bronze Age naturally raises questions over the nature of the society that planned them. Who were the specialists with the skill and knowledge to design and project-manage such enterprises? Was the construction a communal activity or resourced by a powerful ruler? What do such roads imply for the economic activity and long-distance exchange mechanisms for the communities who built them? At Sharpstone perhaps we have a road built for movement of heavy goods and valuable livestock between the productive farmlands of the Midlands Plain and the mineral rich resources of the Shropshire and Welsh uplands. This we cannot prove, but what we can challenge in future is the bland assumption that any road that is relatively straight, built with an *agger* and with a cambered compacted stone surface, must be Roman. Indeed a fresh analysis of such roads, examining them from a prehistoric perspective, may significantly alter perceptions of the impact of Romanization on the infrastructure of Britain.

Tim Malim and Laurence Hayes

THE IRON AGE OF THE THAMES VALLEY: REGIONAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Society of Antiquaries, London, 26th February 2011

Following on from the Society's successful day conferences on the Thames Valley in the Neolithic and the Bronze Age, Alex Lang and Stewart Bryant decided the time was right for the Iron Age to have its day. The day was divided geographically by allocating the morning session to the Upper Thames Valley and the afternoon to the Lower. The morning session began at a relaxed 10am and after a thematic introduction by Alex, the first paper of the day was a dual presentation by Richard Hingley and Tom Moore of Durham University. Richard opened by re-examining his 1980s Germanic Mode of Production model for the Upper Thames and Tom continued by questioning if the model is still a viable way of viewing the region in light of our growing understanding of its socio-political complexities. It was generally acknowledged in discussion that Richard's work was a good starting-point from which the study of the region has grown.

Zena Kamash of Oxford followed with a challenge to re-think Iron Age ceramic chronologies and to reconsider continuity based on her work with the Vale and Ridgeway Project. Of great interest to those examining re-use of landscape will be the anomalous dates from Alfred's Castle suggesting medieval use. George Lambrick then treated us to a wide-ranging talk on the organisation of Iron Age farming settlements in the Upper Thames Valley. Providing evidence drawn from both the environmental record and hydrological analysis, George highlighted some of the changes that Upper Thames farmsteads would have had to adapt to throughout the Iron Age and raised the question of just how and why the landscape may have been organised. Conference organiser Alex Lang followed George by discussing some of his recent fieldwork on banjo enclosures in the same region and how more excavations of this type of site are needed to explain the use of space in the uplands. The session closed with an excellent discussion led by Colin Haselgrove which saw attendees get to grips with what is still useful about the Germanic model and discuss the reliability of ceramic chronologies.

After lunch, the Lower Thames had its chance to shine and the session kicked off with Tim Champion outlining the state of play in Kent. Tim discussed many of the challenges posed by Iron Age Kent, from the ubiquitous chronology issue, to the paucity of Middle Iron Age sites. However, data sources such as large-scale development projects and the Portable

Antiquities Scheme seem to be helping to bridge the gaps. Chris Evans's presentation on the challenges posed by enormous amounts of archived data was both encouraging and cautionary. Whilst great progress has been made on the Iron Age Mucking archive, those who work with the ever-growing volume of data created by developer-driven work in the Thames region must discover ways to avoid runaway 'monster archives'.

The following paper was perhaps the most imaginative if not controversial. Paul Sealey of the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Services presented his theory about the apparent decline of the population of Essex in the Later Iron Age, based upon structural evidence for roundhouses. His 'rule of three', which involved dividing the total number of roundhouses on Essex sites by three to equally spread the number of extant houses over a given temporal span to arrive at population data, seemed to ignore the likelihood of variable settlement size. Whilst Paul's gathering of all the Essex roundhouse data into one place is a useful exercise, perhaps the detour into the numbers game is a little misleading. Nonetheless, this paper in particular stimulated much lively and worthy discussion in the question and answer session.

The day began with a double act, and so it ended, with Stewart Bryant and Isobel Thompson of the Hertfordshire County Council co-presenting their review of the Iron Age of Hertfordshire and London. Once again, we heard a call for re-evaluation of the ceramic chronology, a running theme through much of the day. Most refreshing was hearing the transition date between the Late Iron Age and the Roman period questioned – few Late Romanists are still wedded to AD 410, so why should we think AD 43 is a particularly useful horizon? The closing discussion session was, as previously mentioned, lively and thought-provoking, with final comments from Niall Sharples and JD Hill largely supportive of the day and calling for more synthetic holistic investigations into the Iron Age Thames Valley. Surprisingly, apart from a concerted focus on ceramics as a dating tool, there was very little discussion of artefacts at all. Perhaps another conference on the material culture of the Iron Age Thames Valley is called for. Overall, the day was a highly worthwhile event allowing for much stimulating discussion and positive interaction between participants and attendees.

Wendy A. Morrison, School of Archaeology, University of Oxford

THE GREAT DEBATE: THIS HOUSE BELIEVES THAT THE STUDY OF THE STONE AGES HAS CONTRIBUTED MORE TO OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE HUMAN CONDITION THAN STUDY OF THE METAL AGES

The Champion Debate, 20 October 2010

This was the first of this kind of meeting – a debate – and very appropriately, it was in memory of Sara Champion. Who better than Tim Champion and Clive Gamble to argue their respective cases? Before the debutant debaters were allowed to fire the first shot, there was a straw poll – with the majority favouring stone over metal as having made the greatest contribution to our knowledge of the human condition.

Taking the floor in his usual positive, rumbustious, even flamboyant style, Clive had us playing the 'prehistory game' – of stone, paper and scissors. Paper was soon discarded (as being history and texts and thus not Stone Age). So there was no real contest as stone would always blunt scissors. He developed his theme with some outrageous arguments: "You know where you are with a piece of flint. A piece of bronze on the other hand can be easily distorted. Bent out of shape. Made to tell all sorts of strange and malleable stories. Fickle and treacherous." His ability to have a dig at bankers was brilliant: "And all this talk of treasure. All that gold and silver – it's not treasure, just the first evidence of bankers' greed. Thrown away in rivers and roadsides to become the first slush and hedge funds."

Perhaps his biggest tactical errors were giving up the Neolithic to Tim and comparing hillforts (and especially the pattern of entrances) to body parts: "If you take the wrong turn, you might be stranded forever in a mega-fallopian tube or forced to take up residence in a giant Iron Age testicle." His parting shot was that everything went downhill after the Palaeolithic and everything that could have been invented had been.

At this point in this gladiatorial and stirring contest Tim (Professor Champion) was looking a little worried – but was this brilliant acting or genuine nervousness? Could he retrieve the situation – effectively one nil down before the game started. Clive had whipped the crowd into a frenzy . . . well, by the usual standards of behaviour in the Antiquaries' lecture theatre.

Quietly at first, but calmly and with substance, Tim began to demolish Clive's arguments. First, however, Tim's topicality captured our attention by saying he'd enter a coalition with organic material, as stone would then rank a poor third. He attacked the lack of depth to assertions of durability and longevity for stone and showed that it was the Stone Ages which stagnated and did not give us anything of lasting use: "With stone we see an evolutionary trajectory, not quite to extinction, but to minor bit-parts in flint-lock muskets and cigarette lighters . . .".

He emphasised the lack of continuity from stone to metal: the latter did not draw on the skill or knowledge of the former. His one exception was, of course stone sculptures. However, in warming to his theme he showed how it was the beginning of metal technologies which give us what we have today. His "hammer" blow was delivered with quiet confidence – "the ultimate hard hammer is, of course, a steel one. It needed metal to complete the development of stone technology." This helped me decide how I would vote at the end!

So, when it came to the vote, he made us think about just how much of what we have today is derived from metal, not least mobile phones and transport. Compare what we would have if we hadn't had the Metal Ages? From a defensive position, Tim made penetrating attacks on Clive's propositions, scoring successive blows. Without metal we'd still be knapping flint and living in caves. This was done with some eloquence too, showing how central metal is to our lives: "You, Ladies and Gentlemen in the audience, are sitting there as good as gold, listening to the silver-tongued oratory of Clive and myself, steeling yourselves with iron determination to endure the brazen excesses of our arguments, but, I trust, deriving unalloyed pleasure from this refined debate."



The President, Alison Sheridan, with the victorious Tim Champion

So, in the final analysis – and at the penalty shoot out moment the audience had to decide – had Tim done enough or could Clive hold on to his lead? It was the closest vote and by the narrowest of margins (one) the Metal Age won. I (for one) had changed from my

Stone Age preference before the debate to seeing it from Tim's perspective. An excellent experiment for the Society to try out – and a good audience, kept under control by our new President, Alison Sheridan. So, what will the topic be for next year? What could surpass stone versus metal – could it be theory versus practice?

Bob Bewley

NOTICE OF THE 2011 (FOR 2010) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held on Saturday 14th May at 4.00pm in the Dawson Building, Science Site, Durham University.

Agenda

- 1 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Cardiff University on 8th May 2010 (papers available from the website or from the Honorary Secretary)
 - 2 President's report
 - 3 Secretary's report
 - 4 Editor's report and R. M. Baguley Award
 - 5 Treasurer's report
 - 6 Report on meetings, study tours and research days
 - 7 Awards
 - John and Bryony Coles Award
 - Research Grants (Bob Smith Award and Leslie Grinsell Award)
 - 8 Election of Officers and Members of Council
- The meeting will be followed at 4.30 p.m. by the 20th Europa Lecture. The lecture will be followed by a wine reception.

Registered Office: University College London, Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY.

Notes:

1. A member entitled to vote at the meeting may appoint a proxy to attend and, on a poll, vote in his or her stead. A proxy must be a member, other than an institutional member.
2. To be valid, an instrument of proxy (together with any authority under which it is signed or a copy of the authority certified notarily or in some other way approved by Council) must be deposited with the Secretary, The Prehistoric Society, c/o Archaeology, University of Southampton, Highfield, Southampton, SO17 1BJ, by 4.30 p.m. on the 1st May 2011.
3. Forms of proxy may be obtained from the Secretary at the above address.

PREHISTORIC SOCIETY ACTIVITIES 2010

This report covers the period January to December 2010.

Meetings and Study Tours

The Society continues to fulfil its commitment to reach wide regional audiences and promote its aims and objectives through the delivery of a series of lectures, conferences and study tours. As in previous years, many of these events represent collaborations with other archaeological bodies. Marking the 75th anniversary of the formation of the Society, 2010 saw the delivery of an extensive and varied series of lectures, conferences and tours across Britain and Ireland.

Regional lectures held during 2010 included a joint meeting with the Devon Archaeological Society at Exeter in January, where Chris Tilley lectured on *The Poetics of Barrows*. In June, Richard Mortimer and Alex Pickstone gave a talk on *Further Excavations at the War Ditches, Cherry Hinton* to members of the Society and the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Bad weather early in the year unfortunately led to the postponement of a joint lecture with the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society.

Six conferences were held during 2010. That on *The Bronze Age of the Thames Valley*, held in February at the Society of Antiquaries, London, built upon the success of the previous year's *Neolithic of the Thames Valley* meeting and proved equally popular. The *Creation of "Homes" in the Earliest Farming Period in Eurasia*, held at Durham University in late February, brought together a strong field of speakers who addressed issues relating to Neolithic lifestyles and practices in the Levant, Anatolia, the Mediterranean, Balkans, central and northern Europe. A similarly impressive range of speakers generated lively debate at the conference held jointly with Bournemouth University on the *Wessex Culture? "Revolution" or late Beaker "Evolution" at Bournemouth* in April. May saw a study weekend at Dillington House on the theme of *Prehistoric Landscapes - Real or Imagined?*, and a well-attended day conference in Devizes organised with the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society that reviewed recent research on the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site. Another collaborative event was the meeting held by the Society and the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group in Manchester during late October on *The Present and Future of British Prehistoric Pottery: Finds, Methods, Interpretations*, reassessing ceramic studies from the Neolithic through to the Iron Age and discussing future research directions. The Society also sponsored a very successful session on *Making the Bronze Age* at the annual meeting of the Theoretical Archaeology Group held at Bristol during December.

A Student Study Tour to Ireland, led by Graeme Warren, included visits to iconic archaeological sites such as the Hill of Tara, Newgrange and Knowth, the latter in the company of the excavator, Prof. George Eogan.

A series of special events were organised to mark the Society's 75th anniversary. The Avebury to Grime's Graves 'Thunder Run', held over a weekend in early September, commemorated the 'great *coup d'état*' of 1935, and Stuart Piggott's famous drive to Norwich in order to attend the meeting that transformed the Prehistoric Society of East Anglia into the Prehistoric Society. A series of excellent site talks and picnics were provided for members *en route*. October saw two anniversary events. In the first of these, the 10th Sara Champion Memorial lecture became the 'Champion debate', in which distinguished academics Tim Champion and Clive Gamble argued, in a not wholly serious fashion, the relative merits of the Stone Ages versus the Metal Ages. Held at the Society of Antiquaries, London, the debate was very well attended, lively and highly enjoyable. Later in the month, Rachel Pope delivered a special lecture in Liverpool reflecting on the origins and history of the Prehistoric Society in its anniversary year.

Europa Prize

Dr Pierre Pétrequin of the CNRS was the 2010 recipient of the Europa Prize, which was presented in Cardiff. For the third year, the Europa Lecture was preceded by a well-attended day-conference, on this occasion based around the theme *Sacré Vert! Alpine Axeheads and the Social Dynamics of Neolithic and Chalcolithic Europe*. Speakers included Serge Cassen, Yvan Pailler, Françoise Bostyn, Hélène Collet, Mark Edmonds, Alison Sheridan, Frances Healy and Alasdair Whittle, who addressed topics on Neolithic axe production and exchange, with particular emphasis on Alpine jadeite axes. Dr Pétrequin's Europa lecture, *Programme JADE - understanding Alpine axeheads in Neolithic and Chalcolithic Europe*, formed the end-piece of the day immediately after the Society's AGM (see below).

Research Grants

Research Grants were awarded to M. Gillings (University of Leicester) for fieldwork on the minilithic settings of Exmoor (Leslie Grinsell Prize); B. Edwards and R. Pope (University of Liverpool) for survey of hillforts of the Clywydian Hills; M. Diaz Andreu (University of Durham) for work on the La Valltóra rock art; and H. Wickstead (Kingston University) for the Damerham Landscape Project (Bob Smith Prize). John and Bryony Coles Awards were made to I. Coloquhoun (University of Durham) for a visit to Berlin to view Late Bronze Age swords, and to B. Elliott (University of York) for a visit to Paris to learn antler tool manufacture. Conference funding was given to P. Osypinski (Warsaw University) to

present a paper at the Nubian Studies conference, British Museum; and to H. Russ (University of Bradford) to present a paper at the International Council for Archaeozoology meeting, Paris.

Annual General Meeting 2010 (for 2009)

The AGM was held at 4pm on 8th May, 2010, in the Large Chemistry Theatre, Main Building, Cardiff University, after the Europa day-conference and immediately before the Europa Lecture. The outgoing President, Prof. Clive Ruggles, reflected on his term in office and thanked all Officers and members of Council for their work over the year. He also thanked R. Johnston, who had had to resign as Conservation Co-ordinator due to pressure of work, and retiring Council members D. Garrow, G. Warren, J. Siddell and R. Pope. The President thanked all contributors and the organisers of the Europa Day for their work in bringing the event to fruition.

The following officers and members of council were elected:

<i>President</i>	Alison Sheridan
<i>Vice-President</i>	Ann Woodward
<i>Hon Secretary</i>	Joshua Pollard
<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	Alastair Ainsworth
<i>Hon Editor</i>	Julie Gardiner
<i>Editor PAST</i>	Joanna Brück
<i>Meetings Secretary</i>	Jonathan Last

There were no re-appointments for retiring Council members.

The Baguley Award

The Baguley Award was presented to Alexandra Shepherd on behalf of her late husband, Ian Shepherd, for his article 'The V-bored buttons of Great Britain and Ireland' in volume 75 of the *Proceedings*.

Publications

During 2010, the Society published Volume 76 of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, which contained 12 refereed papers and two shorter contributions on various aspects of British, European and African prehistoric archaeology. There was a particular emphasis on Neolithic and Bronze Age topics. Three editions of *PAST*, the Society's newsletter, were also published during the year, including a special 75th anniversary issue. Good progress was also made on the production of further volumes in the Society's Research Papers series.

Membership and Administration

Membership of the Society during 2010 remained stable. An independent overview of the Society's operations and procedures was undertaken during 2010.

Work on seeking a new publisher for the *Proceedings* continued, and has involved complex negotiations with various academic publishers. A new website (www.prehistoricsociety.org) for the Society was launched at the end of the year, which included on-line facilities for membership registration and subscription payment.

As ever, the Society could not function without the help of a large number of individuals who give freely of their time to organise events and deliver the results of their research. The Society offers sincere thanks to all the individuals who help throughout the year.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

	2010 £	2009 £
<u>Incoming resources</u>		
From generated funds		
Voluntary income	41,681	53,965
Investment income	9,188	9,221
	50,869	63,186
From charitable activities		
Publication grants	10,243	8,238
Copyright fees	2,497	1,123
Publications	572	456
Research papers	-	5,383
Back numbers of Proceedings	4,054	2,045
Conferences	8,155	6,949
Study tours	810	30,280
	26,331	54,474
Total incoming resources	77,200	117,660
<u>Resources expended</u>		
Costs of generating voluntary income		
	7,537	8,542
Charitable activities		
Grants	3,183	2,339
Lectures	435	1,277
Proceedings	34,066	40,545
PAST	9,685	9,603
Research papers	-	6,444
Back numbers of Proceedings	2,676	1,794
Conferences	11,377	9,047
Study tours	1,262	31,653
	62,684	102,702
Governance costs	5,806	4,352
Total resources expended	76,027	115,596
Net incoming resources	1,173	2,064

Total funds at 1 January	156,541	159,638
Net incoming resources	1,173	2,064
Revaluation of investments	1,380	(5,161)
Total funds at 31 December	159,094	156,541

The Statement of Financial Activities is an extract from the full accounts of the Society. Copies of the full accounts for 2011 can be obtained from Tessa Machling at the registered office.

Report of the Treasurer

As a result of a change in accounting policy in 2010, the voluntary income for 2010 shown above is £5,980 less than it would have been if prepared on a comparable basis to the 2009 value. If these subscriptions had been included with incoming resources for 2010 then the Society would have had an operating surplus for the year of £7,153 compared to the operating surplus of £2,064 in 2009. In future years, the Society's results will return to being shown on a comparable basis to the previous year.

The improvement in the Society's surplus in 2010 was due to a continuing reduction in the overall production cost of the *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* including an increase in the value of grants obtained from external organisations to cover the cost of printing some articles.

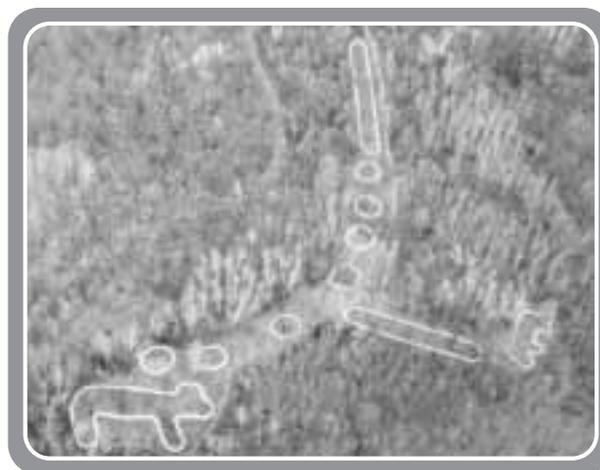
NEW TREASURER AND ASSISTANT TREASURER

The Society is looking for two people who have a few hours to spare each month to take on the positions of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. The Treasurer will be an officer of the charity and will ideally be someone with experience of financial management. The Assistant Treasurer will help the Treasurer by operating our computerised financial accounting system. If you would be able to help us with either of these positions, or are aware of someone who might be suitable, please contact our Secretary, Dr Josh Pollard (email: C.J.Pollard@soton.ac.uk).

MOUNDBUILDERS TOUR, JUNE 2012

The Prehistoric Society proposes to take a study tour to the American Midwest in late June 2012 (16 nights in the US), travelling through 5 states and beginning and ending at Chicago. The tour will visit the full range of Moundbuilder sites from effigy mounds to platform mounds and palisaded village sites, Hopewell enclosures and forts, rock art and the flint quarries at Flint Ridge. We shall visit all of the iconic

sites such as Serpent Mound, and hopefully be at Cahokia to witness the midsummer sunrise over Monks Mound. If you would like further details or to express an interest in the tour, please contact our Membership Secretary at the prehistoric@ucl.ac.uk address or by post at University College London, Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY.



The Great Bear Mound group (north unit) at Effigy Mounds National Monument, Iowa (photo courtesy of the National Park Service).

PREHISTORIC SOCIETY UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION PRIZE

The Prehistoric Society is launching a new prize, to be awarded annually for the undergraduate dissertation that has made the greatest contribution to the study of prehistory in any part of the world. The Prize is open to students from any University in Britain and Ireland.

Each Department is invited to submit one dissertation by a candidate who completed her or his degree during the academic year 2010-2011. The judges will assess entries on the basis of the quality of work, the originality of the approach and the degree to which the research advances our understanding of prehistory.

The winner will receive three years free membership of the Society, the choice of one of the Society's in-print monographs and £100. Three runners up will be awarded a current copy of the *Proceedings*. A revised version of the successful dissertation will be considered for publication in the Society's journal. The award will be made prior to the Sara Champion lecture on the 19th of October 2011.

This represents an excellent opportunity for promising young scholars to have their work publicly recognised. Entries for the current

(2010/2011) academic year are to be sent, by the host Department and in electronic form, to Niall Sharples, Dept. of Archaeology, SHARE, Humanities Building, Colum Road, Cardiff, CF10 3EU, Wales, by the 29th July 2011.

CONFERENCE NEWS

British Rock Art Group 2011 meeting
Birley Room, Room #205, Archaeology Department, Durham University, 7-8 May 2011

For details on speakers, etc., please see http://www.dur.ac.uk/archaeology/conferences/current/rock_art_2011/

Antiquarianism and the History of Archaeology
Birley Room, Room #205, Archaeology Department, Durham University, 21 May 2011

Talks to include: “*Thomas Wright (1711-1786), Louthiana, and the Gothick Revival in England*” (Pam Graves and Peter Rowley-Conwy); “*Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) and Celtic archaeology*” (Collin Wallace); “*‘That scoundrel Mortimer has been spreading caluminous reports’: the antiquarian John Mortimer (1825-1911) and the excavation of the Danes Graves*” (Melanie Giles); “*Creating The Early Christian Monuments of Scotland*” (David Clarke); “*Nineteenth and Twentieth Century ‘Antiquarian’ Research in the North Pennines, England: Place, Space, Theory and Data*” (Rob Young); “*Thomas Bateman (1821-1861) and Crania Britannica*” (Debi Harlan). Registration: £10 including tea/coffee and lunch. Please send a cheque payable to University of Durham to Margarita Díaz-Andreu, History of Archaeology Research Grouping, Department of Archaeology, Durham University, South Road, Durham DH1 3LE.

Ancient Britons, Wales and Europe: New Research in Genetics, Archaeology and Linguistics
Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, National Museum Cardiff, Sat 4 June, 2011

Speakers to include Barry Cunliffe, Stuart Needham, Walter Bodmer, Mark Jobling, John Koch and Catriona Gibson. Registration fee: £33 (£23 for students) including tea/coffee and lunch or £23 (£13 for students) including only tea/coffee. For further information, please contact Angharad Elias at a.elias@cymru.ac.uk or tel. 01970-636543.

Bronze Age Forum
Cardiff, 12-13 November 2011

The next meeting of the Bronze Age Forum will be hosted by the Department of Archaeology, University of Cardiff. The meeting is open to anyone with an interest in the Bronze Age archaeology of Britain, Ireland and our nearest Continental neighbours.

Papers are invited that cover new research and new discoveries in any of these regions for this period. For further information, see <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/share/newsandevents/events/archaeology/baf.html> or email baf@cardiff.ac.uk.

RUN OF PPS

Free to an enthusiastic student: *PPS* vols 1964-1969; 1970-79; 1980-82; 1986-89; and 1990-96. The volumes are in good condition internally; some copies slightly dog-eared. Covers mostly good but a few torn, detached or scuffed. Interested parties must be willing to collect from a London address. For further information, please contact Dr Hugh Cecil: email cecil@warwickave.co.uk.

THE CREATION OF ‘HOMES’ IN THE EARLIEST FARMING PERIOD IN EURASIA

Department of Archaeology, Durham University, 27th February 2010

This one day conference, sponsored jointly by the Prehistoric Society and Durham University’s Archaeology Department and Institute of Advanced Study, focused on the nature of ‘homes’ and houses in the northwest Eurasian Neolithic. It brought together a group of ten key Neolithic specialists, who each presented papers on a different geographical area or thematic aspect of Neolithic ‘homes.’

Alastair Whittle’s keynote address opened the conference by outlining the main issues in the study of the social archaeology of houses and their households. Though emphasising the difficulty of negotiating the theoretical gap between the study of the material remains of Neolithic houses on the one hand and their households on the other, he suggested that changes in house sizes and settlement permanencies may provide suitable proxies for changing intra-group relationships.

Following this, Glynis Jones discussed the social implications of the maintenance of permanent intensive garden plots in the Neolithic. She argued that the necessity to remain close to small-scale plots for tillage, manuring and weeding had a fundamental effect on settlement. Whereas houses could be easily rebuilt or relocated, fertile manured garden soils could not, and therefore represented a considerable investment in the land. She concluded that: ‘home is not the house, but where the garden is.’ However, research by Manuel Arroyo-Kalin has shown that many communities do move soil around to some extent and so prehistorians should consider this as well.

The first geographically themed paper was given by Fiona Coward who focused on the Epipalaeolithic and Early Neolithic of the Levant. She provided a detailed account of the effects of the architectural changes that took place in these periods on family and group structure, as well as on the individual. She contended that though regional social networks increased during this period, social relationships became increasingly fragmented.

Trevor Watkins continued the discussion of the nature of the Near Eastern 'home' by pointing out that as population sizes increased in Anatolia, structures became more compartmentalised and the division between 'public' and 'private' space became more rigid. He reasoned that, as group sizes increased, public social spaces became a necessity, as the numbers of social relationships that the human mind could naturally cope with were exceeded.

Stella Souvatzi moved the debate into Greece, beginning with a discussion of the differing types of Neolithic houses and 'homes' in the area. She explained the active role of the 'home' in creating and transforming social relationships and argued that the changing nature of 'homes' was key to understanding wider changes in the surrounding environment.

Similarly, in his paper, John Chapman outlined the differing Neolithic settlement forms that existed in the Balkans and Hungary – from open sites to tell sites to homesteads. He suggested that the contrasting nature of social relationships and networks that were created in these differing settlement and house types were key to understanding the concept of the 'home' in the Neolithic.

Daniela Hofmann continued this theme with a discussion of the internal architecture of the LBK longhouse in central Europe. She argued that, despite the apparently uniform external form of the LBK house, the changing internal layouts of these structures created differing social spaces that had profound implications for the social interactions that could take place within them.

Robin Skeates's paper on the central Mediterranean again highlighted the variety of Neolithic settlement types that can exist within a single region. In contrast, he pointed out that, on a more local scale, Neolithic settlement on the Maltese islands and Sicily was extremely uniform. He suggested that colonising farmers from Sicily created a sense of 'home' on the Maltese islands through the recreation of the habitus they formerly practiced on the larger island.

Likewise, in his paper, Chris Scarre outlined the changing nature of Neolithic houses in northwest France from monumental LBK-style longhouses in the earliest Neolithic to later smaller rectangular and

circular structures and ultimately to the large longhouses of the Final Neolithic. He contended that the shared morphologies of domestic and funerary monuments indicate the extension of the ceremonial and symbolic into the domestic house and suggested that a cyclical relationship may exist between changing house and monument forms. He also highlighted the problems in identifying Neolithic 'homes' in an area where 'houses' do not appear classically 'domestic' in character.

Chris Fowler presented the last paper in the conference, describing the final manifestation of 'homes' in the most northwesterly corner of Europe. Though stressing the diversity of Neolithic settlement across the British Isles, he argued that the links between the forms of Neolithic funerary monuments and domestic houses provided a useful way of understanding the life-courses of houses and ultimately the communities which used them.

Overall, the conference provided a thoroughly engaging and thought-provoking summary of the new approaches being undertaken to further our understandings of the nature of Neolithic 'homes' and the social relationships in which their households were engaged.

Rosie Bishop, Department of Archaeology, Durham University

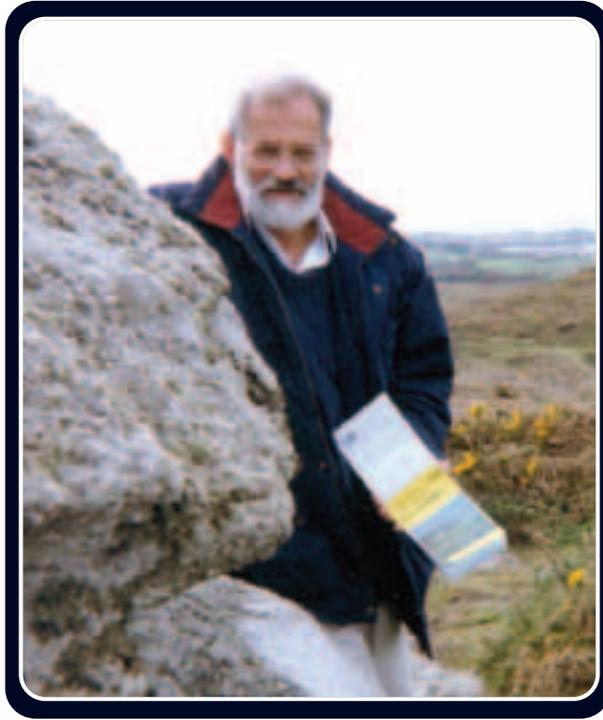
PETER GATHERCOLE

27 March 1929-11 October 2010

There have been heartfelt and detailed remembrances of Peter written by his partner, Bobbie Wells, and his long-time friend and colleague, David Lowenthal, both in *Antiquity*, as well as by a New Zealand colleague, Helen Leach, in the December issue of *Archaeology in New Zealand*. Those that knew Peter, either as the inspiring teacher, an insightful colleague or a kind friend, now have a void in their lives.

It is hard to imagine what it must have been like growing up during the Depression and the Second World War from humble beginnings in the English village of Tilney St Lawrence, about 170 km north of London and a world apart – the population today is but 1500 people. As with so many children during wartime England, he was evacuated to Truro (the administrative centre of Cornwall) to keep safe from German bombing raids. Peter's parents were keen to see him get a good education. He attended Clifton

College in Bristol before gaining a scholarship to Cambridge to study history which he deferred until 1949 while undertaking a stint in the army. After meeting Jack Golson at Cambridge, his life as an



archaeologist was set. After Cambridge, Peter attended the University of London where he was taught by Vere Gordon Childe – Peter, of course, became an authority on Childe's work.

Through encouragement and opportunity Peter ended up in New Zealand, teaching at the University of Otago situated in the cold reaches of the South Island's east coast. For a decade beginning in 1958, Peter left his mark by founding the Otago Anthropological Society, conducting major excavations at several key sites and developing the archaeology programme. While at Otago, in 1963, Peter took an interdisciplinary team to the isolated Polynesian outpost of Pitcairn Island to map the geology, record the vegetation distribution, inventory the place names (for an island of only 4.52 km, there are over 400!) and conduct area excavations at numerous house sites and the huge stone adze quarry at Tautama. Decades before the name was attached to the pursuit, Peter was indeed doing 'landscape archaeology'.

Peter's career took him to the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford where he was affiliated as a Lecturer in Ethnology. He was keenly interested in museums and later held the position of Curator of the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at Cambridge for 11 years following 1970. He became a Fellow of Darwin College and was appointed to the role of Deputy Dean, then Dean between 1981-87. During that time he was a driving force behind the first World Archaeology Congress in 1986.

While Peter will probably be known best for his numerous articles on Childe, for me it was the

Pitcairn connection that first brought us together more than 20 years ago. I landed on the legendary island some 27 years after Peter and it was a wonderful experience to trace his steps *en route* to my own excavations. Peter was the kind of colleague who didn't hesitate to send me his unpublished maps, profiles and numerous photographs that made me familiar with the archaeology before I even set foot ashore. It is Peter's kindness and generosity that will be missed by many.

Marshall Weisler, University of Queensland

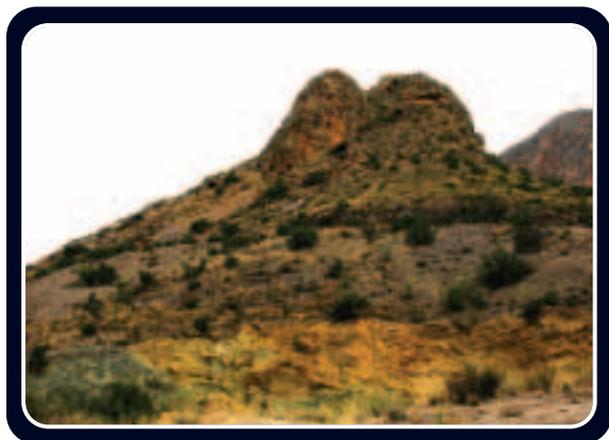
SURVEYING FOR EARLY MINING REMAINS IN SOUTHEAST IBERIA

The Iberian Peninsula is well known for its rich and varied mineral deposits. Yet very few archaeological fieldwork projects have paid systematic attention to evidence for early mining activities there. While western Iberia in recent years has seen some increase in research on prehistoric mining, in most other regions a dearth of data persists, particularly in the southeast, where only the Roman mining operations around Cartagena have been the object of systematic study. This is despite the fact that the Los Millares and El Argar cultures of the Chalcolithic and Earlier Bronze Age in southeast Iberia, and their respective copper and bronze industries, have long been a focus of scholarly interest. On the other hand, there is no shortage of hypotheses linking the introduction and early development of metallurgy in the area to an increase in social complexity and the eventual rise of stratified societies during the third and second millennia BC.

To address the scarcity of data on early mining activities in southeast Iberia, last summer saw the launch of a survey project that aims to record evidence of ancient mining activities in the Sierra de Callosa and Sierra de Orihuela, situated on the border between the modern-day provinces of Alicante and Murcia. The project team includes researchers from Queen's University Belfast, the Freiburger Institut für Paläowissenschaftliche Studien, Museo de Arqueología de Orihuela and Universidad de Murcia.

The first four-week campaign conducted in July and August last year managed to record more than a hundred individual sites, from small exploratory open-cast pits to complex systems of shafts and galleries. While in their vast majority these sites are clearly post-medieval in date, remains from earlier mining operations could also be identified. The most impressive of these is an iron mine of Later Iron Age or Roman date, despite its partial destruction by modern mining activities. One of its shafts was sunk into the rock, taking advantage of an earlier

prehistoric quarrying pit whose purpose seems to have been the extraction of high-quality basalt. Otherwise, direct evidence for prehistoric mining remains largely lacking.



Spoil tips on the southeastern slope of the Cabezo de la Mina

However, the Earlier Bronze Age settlement on the aptly named Cabezo de la Mina sits right on top of the most extensive copper and gold deposits in the Sierra de Orihuela. While modern mining operations have caused a great deal of damage to the Bronze Age settlement and may possibly have obliterated any traces of earlier workings, the very substantial number of hammer stones found on the slopes of the Cabezo de la Mina clearly hints at prehistoric mining activities here. The find spots of these hammer stones are not evenly distributed, and part of the survey work has been to map their concentration in different sectors of the site, hoping that this will provide clues regarding the original location of possible Bronze Age mines. This work will continue this year, when the survey is going to be extended to some as yet unexplored parts of the Sierra de Orihuela and to the Sierra de Callosa.

Already after the first campaign the project has significantly expanded our knowledge of pre-modern mining operations in the area. It is beginning to become evident that the dearth of evidence for early mining in southeast Iberia may be largely due to a lack of systematic survey rather than to an actual absence of mining-related features from the archaeological record, and that the hitherto almost exclusive focus on Cartagena and its immediate environs in the search for Punic and Roman mining operations may have lead to a rather biased picture. As any coherent interpretation of archaeological evidence for early mining will have to take into account its wider economic and social context, later stages of the project will also look at contemporary settlement evidence from the study area, where so far very few prehistoric sites have been excavated using modern field methods.

Funding for the project was kindly made available by the British Academy from its Albert Reckitt Archaeology Fund. We would also like to thank Thomas Stöllner and our other colleagues from the German Mining Museum and the Ruhr-Universität Bochum for their support and help in getting this project underway.

Dirk Brandherm (Queen's University Belfast), Alexander Maass (Freiburger Institut für Paläowissenschaftliche Studien), Emilio Diz Ardid (Museo Arqueológico de Orihuela), María Manuela Ayala Juan (Universidad de Murcia)

EXCAVATIONS BEGIN AT DAMERHAM, HAMPSHIRE

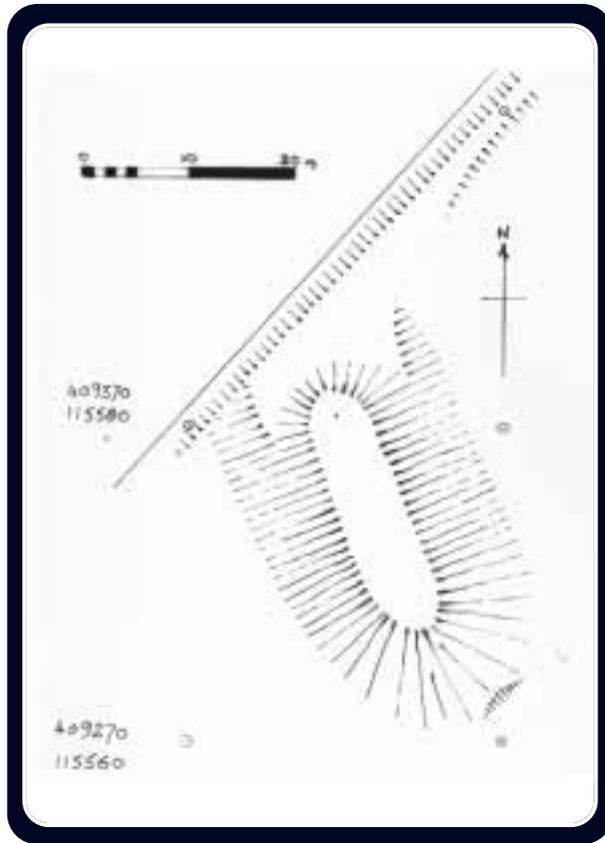
The discovery of an extensive monument complex including two previously unmapped long barrows close to the village of Damerham in Hampshire has excited a great deal of interest locally and nationally over the last few years, even making it into National Geographic's 'Top 10' worldwide archaeological discoveries in 2009. In the summer of 2010, preliminary trenching began at the monument complex alongside the final stages of an extensive programme of geophysics. Here, we report on the findings of the first small-scale excavations and the future potential of this landscape.

History of investigation 2008-2009

Two years ago, we reported on the results of our first, brief, season of fieldwork (*Past* 61). In September 2008, a team led by two of us (Martyn Barber and Helen Wickstead) spent five days – courtesy of Prehistoric Society funding – undertaking targeted geophysical survey at a then newly-recognised complex of more than 40 Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments on the eastern edge of Cranborne Chase. The complex had first been identified as cropmarks on English Heritage aerial reconnaissance photographs, although a field visit confirmed that one of the sites – a probable Neolithic long barrow – survived as a sizeable earthwork. This work succeeded in confirming the potential benefits of using a range of geophysical techniques (gradiometer, earth resistance and GPR survey) to refine details of the aerial survey, further characterise the complex and investigate the wider landscape. In addition, another new Neolithic long barrow was identified. After consultation with members of the Damerham community, the two earthen long barrows were named 'Dampney' (in commemoration of Mr David Dampney, former owner of the site), and 'Pegasus' (the second barrow, under horse pasture).

In 2009 Helen Wickstead and Martyn Barber (in conjunction with Dr Chris Carey and Olaf Bayer) began a phase of more intensive survey. Rapid and

extensive gradiometer survey was combined with more intensive and targeted earth resistance and GPR surveys. High resolution topographic surveys were carried out using GPS. Dr Mike Allen test-augered the two long mounds and one of the round barrows to assess the geoarchaeological characteristics and environmental potential of the sites.



Mark Bowden's field survey drawing of Pegasus Barrow.

Mark Bowden of English Heritage undertook analytical earthwork surveys of Dampney and Pegasus Barrows. This work proved that Dampney Barrow was some 80 metres long and up to 2 metres high above the surrounding ground level. There was no visible surface trace of the flanking ditches, despite their clear presence as strong linear anomalies on the geophysics plots. Pegasus Barrow was much smaller at 40 metres long and at its highest barely 40 centimetres above the surrounding turf.

The 2009 geophysical work revealed extensive archaeological features in the pasture areas of the site which, because they were under grass, could not have been identified through aerial survey. Interestingly, these features did not mirror the monumental landscapes of long barrows and round mounds in the arable landscape, but seemed to reveal a landscape of linear land divisions, some of which resembled later prehistoric land boundaries. Clearly, understanding the potential date of these features and their relationship to the rest of the complex was a priority for 2010.

Excavation begins

Excavations in 2010 were small in scale and exploratory in nature. Our aims were to further characterise the landscape and contribute information that could assist with the interpretation of the large quantities of survey data we were amassing. Geoarchaeological investigations showed two geologies were present in the landscape – Upper Chalk and Undifferentiated Head, both of which evidenced different geophysical responses. The two locations selected for small-scale trenching in 2010 were Pegasus Barrow (on the Undifferentiated Head deposits) and the junction of several linear land divisions (under pasture on Upper Chalk). In addition, Kate Boulden (Cambridge University) undertook an extensive programme of test pitting and geoarchaeological analysis. Dr Shelia Kohring (Cambridge University) joined the directorial team and the project was grateful for the support of the Macdonald Institute of Archaeological Research, as well as the Prehistoric Society.

Pegasus Barrow

Pegasus Barrow lies on a deposit of Undifferentiated Head capping a low, broad chalk ridge. Comprising clay with occasionally plentiful quantities of gravel, its varied composition seemed to be contributing to unusual geophysical results in both gradiometer and earth resistance surveys. Earth resistance suggested a mound of markedly contrasting character to the surrounding soil, with a line of three substantial high resistance anomalies along its approximately northwest-southeast long axis and possibly a ditch or ditches alongside the sides of the mound and continuing, Cranborne Chase-style, around one end.

A pair of offset 6x4m trenches were placed across the southern end of Pegasus Barrow, at right angles to the long axis of the mound and well away from the highest part of the barrow. Excavation revealed that, although the mound was now under pasture, previous



Volunteers, students and sixth formers at work on Pegasus Barrow after the topsoil has been removed.

ploughing had severely degraded the mound. In this, lowest, part of the barrow no pre-mound surface survived, and a narrow band of mound material was deeply scored with plough furrows. A single pit containing sizeable blocks of charcoal was found beneath the mound (the charcoal was subsequently identified as oak by staff at the Centre for Archaeology, Fort Cumberland). The contents of two small post holes cut into the surface of the mound also contained smaller fragments of charcoal. Soil samples comprising the entire fills of these features, plus selected samples from the mound itself, await flotation. However, it seems likely that we should in the very near future have an outline chronological framework for this part of the mound. Artefacts were few in number and comprised mostly waste flakes from the topsoil. The acidic soil conditions of Undifferentiated Head meant no bone survived.

Land divisions in Area E

The trench in Area E was situated on the Upper Chalk in an area of pasture where geophysical survey showed the confluence of several undated land boundaries. Excavation illuminated the sequence of ditch construction as well as suggesting a possible initial chronology for the boundaries.

The stratigraphically earliest features within the trench were Feature 5 (a long straight ditch running east-west across the top of the trench) and Feature 2 (the base of a small pit or post hole). The post hole (Feature 2), appeared to have a structural relationship with two lengths of curving ditch (ditches 1 and 3) which entered the trench from the east and south and curved around as if to meet it. A possible interpretation of this layout is that this post hole was originally the gate post for an entrance feature which once stood at the corner of ditches 1 and 3. All three of these features were then cut by another short length of ditch. This shorter length of ditch seems to reflect a reorganisation of land boundaries, since it effectively blocked off the possible gateway between ditches 1 and 3. This interpretation would suggest that ditches 1 and 3 and the post hole (Feature 2) were in use at the same time. Ditch 1 ran alongside a more substantial ditch (Feature 5) cutting this boundary towards the east edge of the trench. Ditch 1 must therefore have been constructed some time after the larger straighter length of ditch (5). Ditches 1 and 3 (and the subsequent recut joining them together) clearly reference ditch 5, which forms their northern limit. It is very likely that the substantial ditch 5 was still visible as a boundary or earthwork feature when features 1-3 were dug, and the latter represent some kind of reorganisation of land boundaries within the wider landscape.

The primary fills of Ditch 5 contained worked flint and a non-diagnostic sherd, identified in the field as



Area E, mid-way through excavation. Sheila Kohring is standing on the unexcavated fill of Feature 5. In the foreground are the partly excavated Features 1, 1/3, and 5.

possibly of Iron Age or Late Bronze Age date. The possible gate post included a sherd in its upper fills, identified in the field as possibly Romano-British New Forest Greyware. Ceramic finds await specialist attention but, should these initial identifications prove correct, it is not impossible that the linear features in Area E began to be laid out sometime in the later prehistoric or Romano British period. Bulk samples taken from the ditch fills are still to be processed, but it is hoped these may supply charcoal suitable for dating. Analysis of molluscs from the site is in progress, and it possible that some of these samples may also prove suitable for radiocarbon dating.

Future work

Extensive survey work and small scale excavation underlines the significance of this multi-period monumental landscape. Excavations taking place this summer will further investigate the condition of Pegasus Barrow and the relationship between sub-surface deposits and geophysical indicators on Undifferentiated Head. We will also begin to use excavation to assess the potential of earthwork sites in the chalkland landscape including lynchets and the large earthen long mound now known as Dampney Barrow.

Martyn Barber, Shelia Kohring and Helen Wickstead