



Institute of Field Archaeologists

ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS

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AT SWANSEA UNIVERSITY

CALL FOR PAPERS

Please send abstracts of 250-500 words to:

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Sponsored by the Royal Commissions on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and
Wales in celebration of their joint centenary

SESSION ABSTRACTS

The future of the IFA?

Peter Hinton and Mike Dawson, IFA

Council has announced a programme of reform aimed at improving the Institute's ability to represent its members by reflecting better the role of archaeologists across the historic environment sector. This session will reflect on the breadth of the sector, the need for convergence, the practical steps required and Council's aspirations for the future of the sector. This plenary session is an opportunity for you to have your say in the future of our profession.

The Identity of Welsh Heritage

Jenny Hall, IFA Wales/Cymru Group

The recent white paper on Heritage Protection for England and Wales states boldly that Welsh archaeology is different in nature as well in administrative history from that of the rest of the UK. In this session, the speakers will explore the extent to which the idiosyncratic development of archaeological practice and organisation in Wales has led to solutions to the management of the archaeological resource which differ markedly from those elsewhere in the UK.

Speakers in this session will describe the roles of the various organisations, their current and future direction, and the opportunities for working in partnership to the benefit of all, building on the Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Historic Wales portal, and the Welsh Archaeological Trusts' Wales-HMS (Heritage Management System) initiative at a national level; numerous joint projects have been arranged locally, drawing in educational, community, amenity and environmental bodies as partners in heritage work.

This will represent a mutually important opportunity for the archaeological community at large to scrutinize and celebrate the certain advantages enjoyed in Wales and will also offer the potential to identify any lines of weakness or disadvantage inherent in the Welsh system.

Education and training: what 'Maritime Archaeology' are we teaching?

Jesse Ransley, IFA Maritime Affairs Group

Alongside recent expansion of the UK maritime archaeology sector, there is an increasing demand for undergraduate, postgraduate, professional development and avocational courses in maritime archaeology. It is, therefore, an appropriate moment for the maritime archaeological community to address the content, aims and priorities, failings and successes of the varied courses which 'teach' maritime archaeology; to evaluate the different facets of maritime archaeological training and education in the UK as a whole; and, to consider the production of what are quite diverse maritime archaeological pedagogies within each of these areas.

This session will consider such questions as:

- Do, and indeed should, graduate courses in maritime archaeology equip students for jobs in contract maritime archaeology? Should courses serve the students, maritime archaeological research or the 'profession'?
- What are the driving concerns of avocational training: enjoyment, accessible education and public engagement, market demand, supporting the avocational community, or providing an alternative route into the 'profession'? What do such courses promise and which structures do they subscribe to?
- Is there a clear enough differentiation between such training and CPD?

- Should the acquisition of skills alone be the ultimate objective?
- Where does engagement with schools and educational outreach fit into this framework?

It will ask:

- Are there gaps in what we teach about maritime archaeology?
- Which demands and whose assumptions shape the courses that are available?
- And, upon what understandings of maritime archaeology and which teaching objectives are they built?

In short, what do we mean and what are we seeking to do when we 'teach maritime archaeology'?

Surveying, Recording, Collecting, Disseminating: the next 100 years?

Rebecca Jones, RCAHMS, Hilary Malaws, RCAHMW and Nigel Clubb, English Heritage NMR

The year 1908, a generation after the first Ancient Monuments Act of 1882, saw the creation of the Royal Commissions for Scotland, England and Wales. The original Royal Warrant required them "to make an inventory of the Ancient and Historical Monuments and Constructions connected with or illustrative of the contemporary culture, civilisation, and conditions of life... from the earliest times to the year 1707".

Over the last 100 years the three Royal Commissions (that for England is now part of English Heritage) have continued their roles to create inventories of monuments, but the ways in which these inventories and the knowledge represented in them is gathered and disseminated has fundamentally changed. This has been in tandem with many other changes in archaeology, not least the expectations of the public. How to make information accessible, understandable and relevant is key for archaeologists in the 21st century.

The aim of this session is to look briefly at how we arrived at this centenary and then focus on current good practice and future initiatives in surveying, recording, collecting and disseminating across the wide archaeological spectrum. Finally, given the pace of change in recent years, what steps do we need to consider in our aspirations for the next 100 years?

Archaeology in the 21st century: developing our profession or cutting our own throats?

Peter Hinton, Institute of Field Archaeologists, David Jennings, Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers, and Victoria Bryant, Medieval Pottery Research Group

The development of commercial archaeology over the last 25 years has transformed British archaeology. The number and range of sites investigated has increased dramatically; the amount spent on archaeology has risen accordingly and the number of paid archaeologists has trebled to approximately 6000. So why are so many of us feeling more than a little worried about the state of our profession? Could it be because we observe

- low levels of pay compared to other similar professions
- lack of commitment to training and career development
- increasing specialisation of staff leading to lack of understanding of the "big picture"
- increasing "out-sourcing" of specialist staff leading to fragmented reports and frustrated archaeologists

The aim of this session is not to moan about each other but to

acknowledge the problems and move on. We would like to take an honest look at the way commercial archaeology is working today. The price of archaeology is set by archaeologists - do we set it too low? Do we price the whole job? Are we undervaluing specialist knowledge? How can curators and contractors work together to develop knowledge? How do consultants affect the profitability of archaeology? How much should we depend on self-regulation and how much on central or local government? What models of good practice could we use from our own profession and others to ensure that our training and career development needs are met?

Taking wider perspectives: historic landscapes in the twenty-first century

Andrew Marvell, Glamorgan Gwent Archaeological Trust

The profile of Historic Landscapes has been raised significantly in the past decade. Historic landscape characterisation has been developed as a key part of the tool-kit to assist the investigation, interpretation, and protection of the historic environment at national, regional and local levels. On a wider scale objectives have been set in the European Landscape Convention, which the United Kingdom at last ratified in 2006 and which came into force in this country in 2007. The importance of Historic Landscape has filtered into the Heritage Protection White Paper, but only in the Welsh Chapter is there a specific paragraph concerning Characterisation.

This session will look to review the different historic landscape characterisation methods that have been developed at national level throughout the United Kingdom. Are they complementary or incompatible? Are different methods better suited for protection as opposed to investigation or analysis? Has the work enhanced protection? Are we now in a better position to arrest loss?

Other questions to explore relate to measuring change and applying methods. Are the methods for measuring potential loss (eg ASIDOHL) effective? Can characterisation be applied effectively in Urban and Suburban environments? Are there lessons to be learnt from other disciplines concerned with protecting the environment?

It will then seek to consider how the study of the historic landscape and the application of characterisation and other techniques are resulting in new narratives of the past. Papers in this section can relate to either finished or on-going projects at both national and local scales.

Can the products of these projects and other characterisation works be used to strengthen sensory perception of the past in modern communities, and if so, how might this be delivered most effectively?

Progressing Professional Practice

Philip Mills, IFA Finds Group

This Finds Group session is based on a recent survey of finds practice in the commercial sector in the UK. We hope to go beyond an anecdotal framework of current practice, and use this data to establish strategies for developing the professionalisation approaches of finds work in all aspects of the sector. Papers are particularly welcomed on aspects of current practice, training new specialists, outreach and dissemination of finds data.

Artefacts, geomatics and landscapes

Jane Evans, Finds Specialist

GIS, integrating a range of data, is now a standard technique used by archaeologists studying landscapes. It is used by university based researchers to analyse distributions of artefacts within landscapes. But how familiar are professional finds researchers with the potential and problems of using GIS? Some specialists, based at units undertaking large scale projects, will have had the opportunity to link in with GIS based analyses. Many will not, particularly the increasing number of freelance specialists. I

would argue that with the development of GIS based Historic Environment Records all specialists need to have an understanding of the methodologies involved. Equally, all specialist groups should be contributing to the developing methodologies - how do we want artefacts to be recorded in a GIS system so that the data is of value to us? How practical is it for us to build on HER data if neighbouring counties have different systems, and units and individuals still have their own separate recording systems?

The session would aim to look at case studies of major research projects using GIS to analyse artefact data and projects incorporating artefact data undertaken by contracting units. The session would also include curatorial archaeologists: case studies based on HER applications, curators involved in writing project briefs for developer funded projects that should ultimately provide data for the HER. It could also include representatives of specialist groups who are active in developing uniform methodologies for artefact research.

Sense of place - what it means and why it matters

John Schofield and Rosy Phillipson, English Heritage

It is such a familiar phrase, and one now commonly used in professional and domestic situations to describe the emotional attachment people have to the places they hold dear. This sense of place - sometimes referred to as '*genius loci*' - can equate with what has been termed 'the lure of the local', with its concern for the familiar - the place where we live, or where we lived when we were children. It is also about rootedness, belonging, stability and identity. But that's a very broad definition and perhaps not so helpful in policy work, and developing community-based projects that seek to assess or characterise local areas. As heritage management practices increasingly take account of 'the local', and draw on the views and expressions of interest amongst local communities (people telling *us* what matters to *them*), the need to fully understand what is meant by sense of place, and its uses and implications, becomes arguably more important than just semantics. This session will attempt to review what is meant by sense of place, and why (or whether) it remains useful in the context of heritage management practice. To encourage a broad debate on these issues, and to draw on a range of experiences and examples, speakers are invited from fields including geography, archaeology, planning/local government, anthropology and art as well as from local communities. Case studies and theoretical perspectives are equally welcome.

Topographic influences on evaluation techniques in the UK

Mark Williams, Archaeological Project Services and Mike Dawson, CgMs

It is now well established that contractors and consultants work throughout the UK in various topographic zones etc. It is essential that archaeologists who work in a variety of topographic zones appreciate how evaluation techniques can and should vary depending on the particular area.

The aim of the session will be to analyse the use of evaluation techniques in use in Britain specifically in relation to topography. Speakers will be encouraged to chart the evolution of the techniques within the specific areas and critically analyse their current application and suggest improvements. It will also review intuitive versus statistical approaches.

Speakers will be invited from a broad range of arenas. Specialists in geographical areas will be invited to discuss how specifics of topography have influenced the development of evaluation techniques through its influence on past settlement distribution, survival and visibility of archaeological remains and current techniques.

Specialists in particular techniques will be invited to discuss how topographical variation influences their techniques.

Intended outcomes will be to

- Highlight how an understanding of topography is essential in selecting the most appropriate efficient and cost effective techniques and also the way that topography has influenced the nature and distribution of settlements in the past.
- Stimulate debate on the usefulness of techniques.
- Suggest improvements to current practice

It is intended that the proceedings will be published as a series of papers edited by Mike Dawson and Mark Williams.

Meeting the climate change challenge

Gill Chitty and colleague, Council for British Archaeology

Action on climate change now dominates national policy and planning. The effects of global warming, and the indirect effects of our attempts to adapt and mitigate it, are affecting almost every aspect of the historic environment but this has scarcely been visible in recent Government guidance and policy. It may be low down the agenda but appreciating the way that climate change has affected communities in the past is a powerful way to help people to engage with climate change today. The worst effects may not be happening on our doorstep - or not yet - but the impacts on historic landscapes, sites and buildings are already real. How can we work effectively to reduce the risks, to prioritise in the face of widespread changes to landscape and coasts, and to engage actively with the opportunities.

To meet that challenge will mean thinking and working in new ways. It's early days (and we are still exploring the potential questions, never mind the answers) so thoughtful, informative and challenging papers are sought on two related themes.

Putting it in perspective: Can palaeo-environmental and archaeological research - for example the study of underwater remains of early landscapes and communities around Britain's coasts - bring new understanding of the processes and outcomes of climate change? What do we know about the pace of climatic change in the past and how communities responded to it? Can we learn sustainable practice from the way people lived and worked with their environment in the past?

Building capacity for adaptation: What research is being done already to manage the risks to archaeological sites, landscapes and historic buildings, what is it telling us, and what new research do we need to pursue?

Building communities

Catherine Cavanagh, IFA Buildings Group

Within the realm of archaeology, the study of the built environment is potentially the most accessible. People live, work, shop, and generally coexist with historic buildings in their everyday lives, a perpetual connection that can spark interest within the community. Yet, how effectively do we engage others in what we do? This session will discuss the involvement of the public with buildings analysis, from volunteer recording sessions to outreach programmes and continuing education courses.

As archaeologists we need to realise the sometimes untapped abilities and enthusiasm of local people. Communities can contribute tremendously to our understanding, whether through consultation about the past history of buildings, or by giving their time to learning about their local architecture and subsequently passing this knowledge and interest onto others. In discussing the practicalities and benefits of community participation, we are aiming to develop policies for stronger relationships between professional and academic study and the wider public.

We would particularly welcome papers which discuss projects in Wales. Speakers don't have to be archaeologists and we're keen to have representation from local groups and other professions. Offers of assistance for an afternoon tour around Swansea or the

vicinity would be gratefully received.

Managing Archaeology

Viv Hamilton, Nautical Archaeology Society and Kenneth Aitchison, IFA

This session will explore the key skills and experiences that archaeologists need as they develop their careers by gaining responsibility for the work of others, for managing projects and for developing standards and implementing policies. Papers are invited covering topics on all aspects of management in archaeology, potentially including

- What is involved in managing archaeology and in being an archaeological manager?
- Does managing public sector archaeology need a particular skillset?
- How does an archaeologist manage the potentially conflicting demands of different stakeholders?
- Do the business skills of entrepreneurial management have any place in ethical archaeological organisations?
- How do you develop the skills and competencies needed for the high-level NVQs in Archaeological Practice - are there parallels in other professional sectors?
- What management competencies are key and how does good management benefit the archaeological community as a whole?
- How can we provide a career path for archaeologists beyond the crucial "drop out point" after five years in the profession?
- What is the role of the professional association in supporting management development and professional standards of management?
- How can we plan for and manage succession for the very experienced managers and directors now approaching retirement age?

IFA Workplace training

Kate Geary and Natasha Kingham, Institute of Field Archaeologists



Following on from last year's highly successful session showcasing the work of trainees on the EPPIC and HLF Workplace Learning Bursaries schemes, this year we will be updating you on the progress of the two schemes and introducing you to the latest archaeologists to be benefiting from them.

Once again, the focus of the session will be on presentations by past and present placement holders. There will be an opportunity to hear from trainees in a variety of different placements across the UK, some of whom are working towards the Qualification in Archaeological Practice. We also hope to include some presentations from supervisors to explain what it is like to host a placement.

This year's EPPIC placements have been with the aerial survey team and archaeological investigation teams in York, the architectural investigation and archaeological investigation teams in Cambridge, the architectural investigation team in Swindon and the architectural graphics team in London and once again have been run in partnership with IHBC.

New HLF Workplace Learning Bursaries have been set up with North Yorkshire County Council, AOC Archaeology, Headland Archaeology and the NMR, with further placements due to be launched with ADS, the Nautical Archaeology Society, Southampton City Council and the Lake District National Park to name but a few.

This will be an excellent opportunity for those involved in both schemes, either as trainees or supervisors, to meet and exchange experiences and ideas. We would also like to invite any prospective hosts to come and learn about the scheme first hand.