



## Nantgarw Pottery

With the recent publication of two major books on Welsh Ceramics and the Nantgarw Pottery as well as a Major new exhibition, I thought it would be an ideal time to review the subject and the publications.



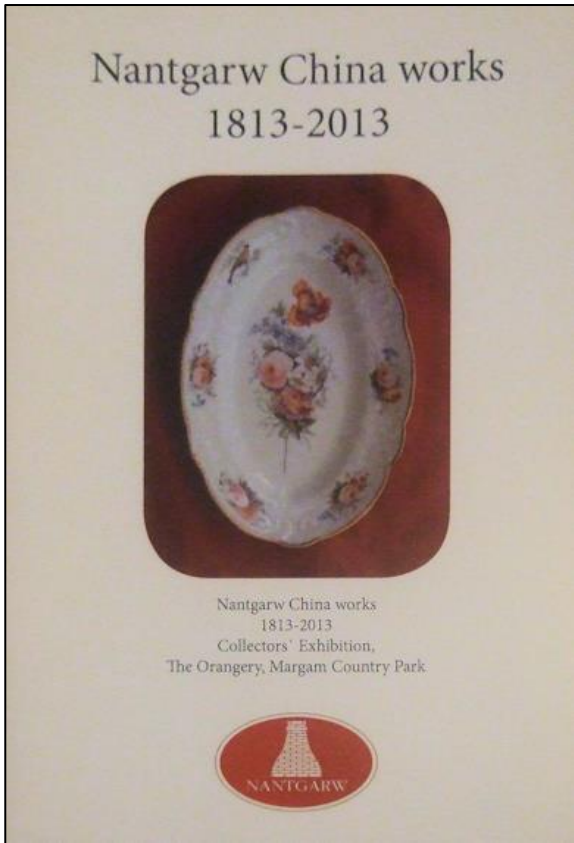
The Nantgarw China Works site houses the original pottery site, the bottle kilns and three separate buildings including all three floors of Nantgarw House.



The Nantgarw China Works is the only surviving early 19th century porcelain works in the United Kingdom. In the years 1813-1814 and again in the period 1817-1820 the finest porcelain in the world was produced here in Wales by William Billingsley, one of the most remarkable porcelain painters and manufacturers of his time.



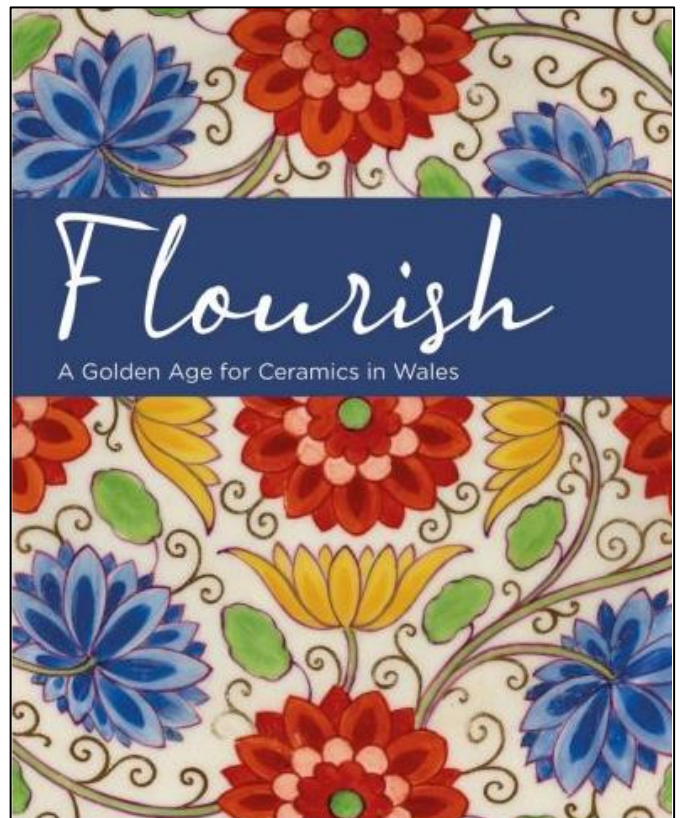
## FEATURES



2019 saw the publication of "Coming Home" - a 136 page catalogue to compliment the exhibition to celebrate 200 years since White Gold was produced at Nantgarw. It was a celebration of the achievements of William Billingsley, Samuel Walker and Thomas Pardoe. The exhibition displayed some of the finest Nantgarw wares, including 23 pieces from Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum of Wales. Items from the John Andrews Charitable Trust and Oriel Plas Glyn y Weddw were also on display. A series of talks were also hosted, along with demonstrations of slip casting, enamelling and gilding.

For almost 160 years south Wales was a prolific centre of pottery and porcelain production. Items ranged from everyday, mass-market objects to valued personal commissions and desirable pieces of high fashion.

In 2013 an exhibition, Nantgarw China works 1813-2013, was held at the Orangery, Margam Country Park by the Nantgarw China works Trust to celebrate the bicentennial of the arrival of Williams Billingsley and his family to Nantgarw.



In 2022 Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum of Wales produced a lavishly illustrated and highly informative book "Flourish" exploring the



## FEATURES

period between the 1760s and 1920s when in Swansea, Nantgarw and Llanelli a small group of remarkable people were pouring their passion, talent and money into perfecting pottery and porcelain.

Llyfrau Amgueddfa Cymru/National Museum Wales Books, Cardiff 2022 Paperback, 160 pages

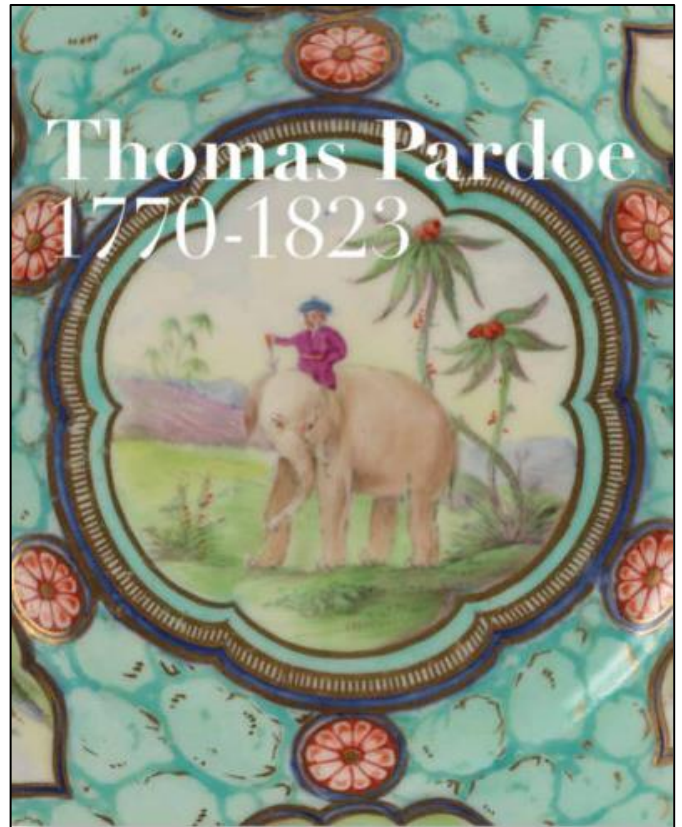
To commemorate the bicentenary of the death of the celebrated ceramic decorator Thomas Pardoe, Nantgarw China Works & Museum is presenting the first ever major exhibition of his work.

The exhibition features superb examples of ceramics from throughout his career but with particular emphasis on the work decorated at Swansea, in Bristol and at Nantgarw China Works where he died in 1823.

Curated by Andrew Renton and Jonathan Gray the exhibition presents around one hundred and fifty items on loan for the exhibition from major public and private collections throughout the UK. Lenders include Amgueddfa Cymru-Museum Wales, The Holburne Museum, Oriol Plas Glyn-y-weddw and major private lenders.

The exhibition opens on September 9th and runs through to December 17th. Admission is included in the entry to the museum.

The book 'Thomas Pardoe 1770-1823' has been published to coincide with the exhibition and includes a full biography, illustrations and notes on all the items in the exhibition.



Thomas Pardoe was without doubt one of the most versatile painters of pottery and porcelain of the late 18th and early 19th centuries in Britain. Yet with an extensive body of work produced over a period of some thirty years at Swansea, Bristol and Nantgarw it has taken until the two-hundredth anniversary of his death to produce a publication dedicated solely to his work. Pardoe has a particular poignancy for Nantgarw China Works as this was where, in the last three years of his life, he produced some of his very finest work. His legacy continued at Nantgarw for another one hundred and fifty years as his descendants ran the Nantgarw Pottery until its closure in 1920 and continued to live on at the site until the 1970s.

Author: Andrew Renton, Jonathan Gray, Charles Fountain 2023 Paperback, 152 pages

Publisher: Nantgarw China Works & Museum

***CAS visited Nantgarw Pottery in 1993, 2002 & most recently in 2018***

## FEATURES

# Highlights from the Magazines

Links to Past Articles :

[Current World Archaeology #120](#)



[La Tène - A place of memory](#)

[Current World Archaeology #119](#)

[Power or Decadence? - Luxury under the Achaemenids, Athenians & Alexander the Great](#)

[Current World Archaeology #118](#)

[Qasr Bshir - Conserving a special Roman fort](#)

[Current World Archaeology #117](#)

[The city thirsts - Water in Istanbul: past, present, and future](#)

[Current World Archaeology #116](#)

[Ötzi's one-man show](#)

[Current World Archaeology #115](#)

[Circles of stone - Exploring the monuments of Jomon Japan](#)

[Current World Archaeology #114](#)

[The Great Maya Aquifer - Exploring a hidden world beneath the Yucatán Peninsula](#)

[Current World Archaeology #113](#)

[Discover Muğla Province](#)

[Ancient Antalya](#)

[Digging Caesar's Forum - Three thousand years of daily life in Rome](#)

[British Archaeology Sept-Oct 2023](#)



[Those Feet in Ancient Time - Developing an Archaeology of Movement](#)

[Routes and Roots - Our Journey with Trees](#)

## FEATURES

A Radical New Idea: 20 Years of the Portable Antiquities Scheme

A Walrus in Avalon

Investigations at Dovecliff Weir - Recording Historic Methods of Construction

Archaeology and Construction: An Odd Couple or a Fruitful Partnership?

Lowestoft Post Office Revisited

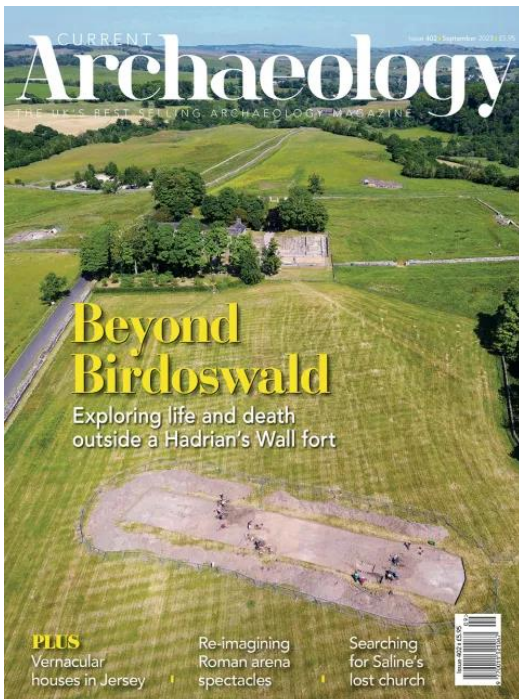
Narrow Seas: Pevensey Roman Fort & Castle

Unearthing Uist Archaeology

Launching the CBA's Youth Advisory Board & Young Associate Network

The Public, the Professional, & the Political

[Current Archaeology September 2023](#)



[Beyond Birdoswald - Exploring the Extra-mural Settlement of a Hadrian's Wall Fort](#)

Magnifying Milecastle 46 - First Modern Excavations of Hadrian's Wall Site Begin

Gladiators - A Day at the Games

Hints from Hamptonne - How to Build a Jersey Farmhouse

Unearthing a Medieval Mystery - The Search for Saline's Lost Church

Archaeology on Prescription - Using Fieldwork to Support York's Mental Health Provision

Using Incremental Strontium Isotope Analysis to Recreate Subsistence Ranges

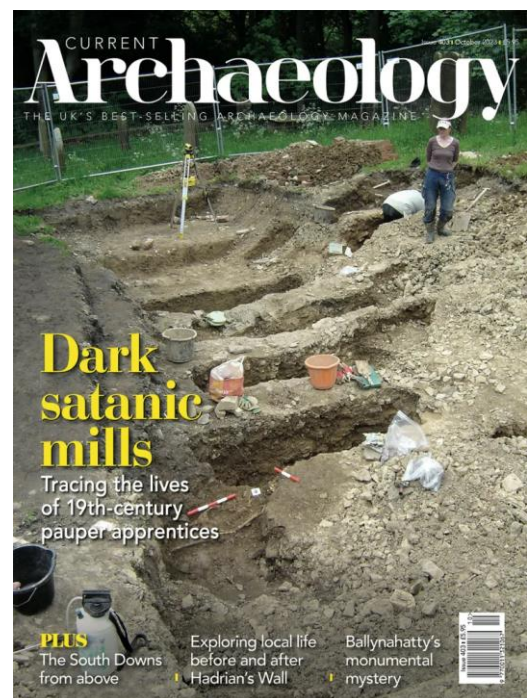
Park Life Then & Now - Victoria Park, London

Wroxeter Roman City

Pirates - Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, Cornwall

Odd Socs - Lancashire Parish Register Society

[Current Archaeology October 2023](#)



## FEATURES

Ballynahatty - Reconstructing a rare Neolithic Timber Monument

[Tired beyond all Telling - Revealing the Hard, often Brief, Lives of Pauper Apprentices at Fewston, North Yorkshire](#)

Above the Downs - Documenting Human History from the Neolithic to the Cold War

Before & After Hadrian's Wall - Living on the Roman Frontier East of the Pennines

The Conington Teenager - Being Different in Anglo-Saxon England

Sticking with it - Identifying Woodworking Strategies in the Palaeolithic

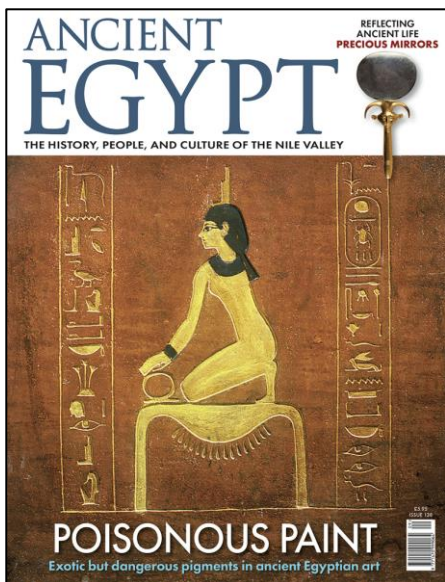
Green-fingered Finds - Piecing together the History of Scotney's Old Castle

Drawing Dinas Dinlle, Caernarfon, Gwynedd

Beneath Our Feet - Archaeology of the Cambridge Region

Odd Socs - The UK Paranormal Society

[\*\*Ancient Egypt Sept-Oct 2023\*\*](#)



Flinders Petrie's Sequence Dating Chart

House of Life

Cleopatra II, Traditionally Untraditional

The High Steward Amenhotep

Magical Honey - Some Unusual Uses in Ancient Egypt

Exotic Colour & Pigments in Early Ancient Egypt

Mirrors in Ancient Egypt

A First Look at the Grand Egyptian Museum

Object Highlight - Stela of Lady Taperet

## CAS Trips 2023 Part 2

[\*\*Brecon Museum and Town Brecknock Society & Friends of Brecon Museum 29 July\*\*](#)



*Brecon Cathedral*

Meeting at the Lych Gate, at the northern end of the Cathedral, we quickly moved into nave where we were greeted by the Cathedral Chapter Clerk, Mike Williams; William Gibbs,

## FEATURES

chair of the Brecknock Arts Trust; and Professor Emerita Maddy Gray for an introduction and tour of the various aspects of the Cathedral.



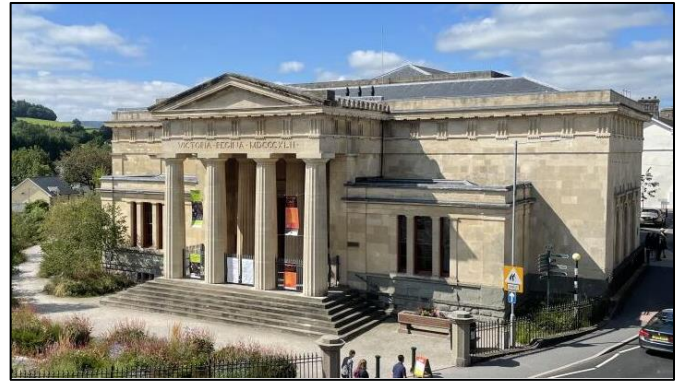
*Brecon Cathedral High Altar*

We were then given a guided walk down to the town via the Castle and other points of interest by Nigel Clubb, President of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends.



*Brecon Castle*

The afternoon saw us assembling at the Y Gaer Museum and Art Gallery, which had been recently rejuvenated and expanded with the help of an Heritage Lottery Fund grant. John Gibbs gave us an introduction to the Museum and outlined its history.



*Y Gaer Museum*

William Gibbs gave us a brief introduction to the portraits and sculptures in the Courtroom and to the current major exhibition at the Museum.



*The Old Court Room, Y Gaer Museum*

We then walked around the surviving parts of the Town Walls and completed the day with a walk along the Brecon and Abergavenny Canal towpath as far as the Watton limekilns.

### Llantwit Major 14 September AM

The first site we visited was being excavated off Burial Lane near the church, where Tim Young guided us through the excavation which has uncovered finds from the Roman period as well as the expected Medieval remains.

## FEATURES



*Tim Young at Llantwit Major*



His excavations have disclosed a collapsed dry retaining wall, as seen down the middle of the above photo, along with iron working deposits and some burials close by. Earlier excavations above the site uncovered a Bronze Age sword and Roman Samian ware and a mortaria. Interestingly Fullers Earth deposits were also found near a small local quarry.



Tim is currently working on a project to determine the extent of the early Monastic administrative complex at Llantwit, in conjunction with Cardiff University.



*Dovecot*

We continued our visit by walking up to the Gatehouse and its associated Dovecot and Tithe Barn remains, before returning to view St



Illtud's Church and its Stones display in the Galilee Chapel.



*Cross Shaft*

### Fonmon Excavations 14 September PM

Our second visit of the day was to the latest excavations underway by Andy Seaman of Cardiff University. Tudur Davies escorted us over the site and explained the work of the Fonmon Castle Landscape Archaeology Project, one of the largest research-led projects in Wales. Now in its third year it involves studying the extensive Early Medieval remains that have been discovered in the fields to the west of the castle.



*CAS member Allan Hair makes a huge discovery at Fonmon*

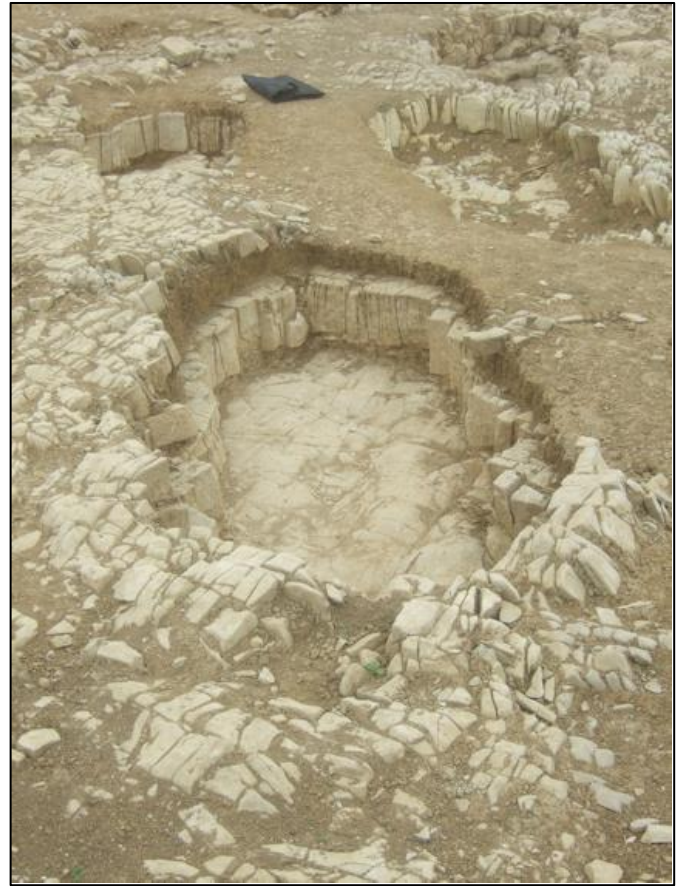


*Meanwhile our CAS Committee member Kim Iannucci digs a trench out from the bedrock*

## FEATURES



*Tudur Davies, our Guide*



*8<sup>th</sup> Century Grave*



CAS Members look over one of the Two huge trenches, whilst Tudur explains the ditch-contained Cemetery site carved out of the White Lias bedrock. The excavations uncovered 18 burials, some in crouched position, but very few grave goods. The human remains had been lifted by the time we visited the site. But the digging through the rock must have taken some doing as shown by the photograph opposite.

## Quiz

1. Roman emperor whose return from campaigns in Spain & Gaul was honoured by the building of the Ara Pacis
2. Ancient pictoscript of Easter Island
3. Metal alloyed with tin to produce bronze
4. Pieces of armour protecting the lower legs
5. Roman governor of Britain from 78 to 84 AD
6. Elias ..., English antiquarian born in Lichfield in 1617
7. Name given to the Middle Stone Age
8. Army that fought the Greeks at the Battle of Marathon

9. Goddess of agriculture in Greek mythology

10. First name of Bloodaxe, king of Norway

## Future Events

### Lectures

This year our meetings will be held in Cardiff University, and we will still be able to manage hybrid Zoom facilities from this location.

**5th October 2023**

**St Saviour's Dominican Friary,  
Haverfordwest - the consequences of  
construction within a Medieval town.**

Fran Murphy, MCIFA, Head of DAT  
Archaeological Services, Dyfed Archaeological  
Trust.

In 2022 DAT Archaeological Services carried out a 7 month excavation below what was the old Ocky White department store building in Haverfordwest, Pems.. The archaeologists revealed the remains of a well-used cemetery, a cemetery believed to be associated with the Dominican medieval friary of St. Saviour's, whose exact location has until now never been ascertained. The remains of more than 300 burials were excavated by the team of archaeologists, as well as the first phases of St Saviour's Friary, established in the early 13th century.

**19th October 2023**

**New research on the Neolithic of the  
Northern Isles of Orkney.**

Prof. Vicki Cummings, Head of School, SHARE,  
Cardiff University.

This lecture presents the results of recent work in the Northern Isles of Orkney. Over the past few years new excavations have explored two Neolithic sites on Sanday: an early Neolithic settlement at Cata Sand and, just a short distance away, the chambered tomb at Tresness. These excavations have provided important insights into life on the Northern Isles in the early Neolithic. We have new information on the first farmers to arrive in these islands, as well as evidence for wider, ongoing connections throughout the early Neolithic. These were not people living on the edge of the Neolithic world, but at the centre of a vibrant and successful archipelago well-suited to an agricultural lifestyle, and very much in touch with wider Neolithic communities.

**2nd November 2023**

**The fifteenth-century Herbert tombs in  
Tintern Abbey: fact, fiction or something in  
between?**

Prof. Madeleine Gray PhD, FRHistS, FSA, FRSA.,  
Professor Emerita of Ecclesiastical History,  
University of South Wales.

We only know the tombs of William Herbert, earl of Pembroke, and his son William, earl of Huntingdon, from the drawings in a late seventeenth-century family history. Unfortunately, the author, Sir Thomas Herbert of Tintern, had form when it came to creative embroidery of the facts. His drawings cannot be completely accurate - but are they complete fiction, or do they have any basis in fact? And how far can we use them to add to our understanding of Wales during the Wars of the Roses?

**16th November 2023**

**Who Are You calling Neanderthal? Recent  
work at Shanidar cave, Iraqi Kurdistan.**

## EVENTS & LINKS

Dr. Tim Reynolds, Senior Lecturer, Department of History, Classics & Archaeology, Birkbeck, University of London.

Neanderthals have long suffered from being our nearest neighbours. They are a mirror we can hold up to judge how we think of ourselves and our 'humanity'. Work at Shanidar in the 1950s challenged negative views of Neanderthals calling them 'The First Flower people' (Solecki 1971). It was said Neanderthals buried their dead respectfully with flowers. Since then Neanderthals have been found to contribute to Eurasian modern human DNA and lived as contemporaries with us for thousands of years. So where does this leave us, and our views on Neanderthal 'humanity'? Recent work at Shanidar has been using modern science to explore the earlier claims for Neanderthal humanity.

**30th November 2023**

**Putting Knossos on show.**

Dr. Andrew Shapland, Sir Arthur Evans Curator of Bronze Age and Classical Greece, Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Since its discovery in 1878 the palace of Knossos on Crete has become one of the most well-known archaeological sites in the world. In 2023 the Ashmolean's exhibition Labyrinth: Knossos, Myth and Reality brought together finds made by Sir Arthur Evans and other archaeologists to show how Knossos has come to be understood today. This talk will place this exhibition in its wider context of the presentation of Knossos to the public, from Evans's concrete reconstructions to developments in digital technology.

## Links to Websites

**Virtual Tours:**

**National Roman Legion Museum**

The National Roman Legion Museum in Caerleon has launched a new tour allowing you to explore its collection. Users can move around a virtual version of the Museum gallery, clicking on key objects in display cases to read more about them. To access the tour at:

<https://museum.wales/ext/caerleon-panorama/>

**Tomb of Djehuty, Egypt**

Explore the tomb of Djehuty, an official under Thutmose III in Ancient Egypt's 18th Dynasty, with this Google Arts & Culture page.

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/dqXhH3qNIGFtdQ>

**Angkor Wat, Cambodia**

See Angkor Wat as it may have looked at its height in the 13th century with immersive virtual reality 360 degree videos and other resources from the Virtual Angkor project.

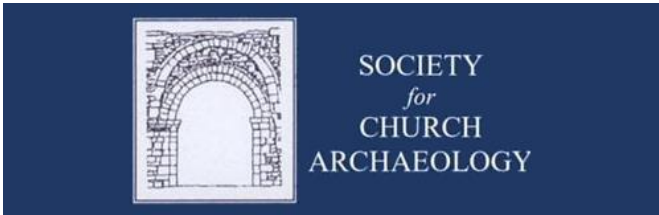
<https://www.virtualangkor.com/>

**My Son, Vietnam**

Explore the My Son sanctuary, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is home to a group of temples dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, which were built between the 4th and 13th centuries in the heart of the ancient Champa Kingdom.

<https://vietnam.travel/sites/default/files/360Tour/MySon/index.htm>

### Recorded Previous Lectures:



### The Rediscovery of Reading Abbey

by Dr Ron Baxter

Reading Abbey was built as a royal mausoleum by King Henry I; a great architectural statement made by a king who has been described as the most powerful of his time in Western Europe. At the same time it has remained something of an enigma, scarcely mentioned in the standard histories of architecture because information about it remained scanty. Most of the fabric was destroyed soon after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, and what remained was the site of a siege in the sixteenth-century Civil War. As a source of building stone in the centre of a growing town, the ruins have repeatedly been plundered. Only recently has it become possible to bring together the scattered evidence into a coherent narrative. This talk covers not just the form of the buildings but also a fresh interpretation of the abbey's significance during the medieval period.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D3s0zoRzdl8>

## Answers to Quiz

1. Augustus 2. Rongorongo 3. Copper 4. Greaves 5. Agricola  
6. Ashmole 7. Mesolithic 8. Persian 9. Demeter 10 Eric