



The CAS Minibus trip to North Somerset 2004

This edition of the Newsletter takes a nostalgic look back to a past visit to North Somerset. Nearly 20 years ago CAS had the following itinerary, which I hope will prove interesting to our members.

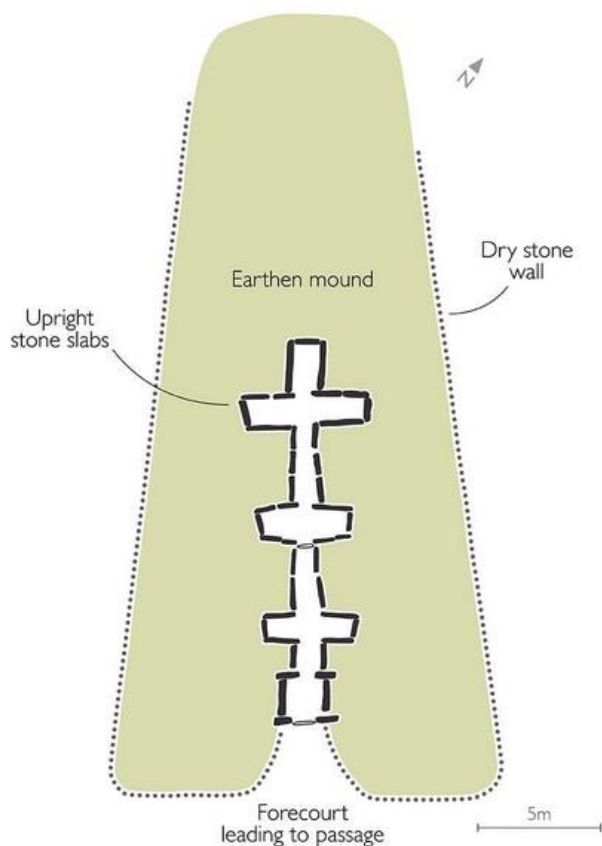
Stoney Littleton



Photograph by Mike Peel CC-BY-SA-4.0

Our first visit was to Stoney Littleton which has a Neolithic chambered tomb in the Cotswold/Severn tradition from between 3750 and 3400 BC. It measures 30.5 by 15.2 metres and is among the finest known long barrows of the 'true entrance' type as distinct from the presumably later examples with false entrances. At the front are two projecting horn flanking a forecourt with an entrance to the chambers. There is an ammonite fossil set into the left-hand door jamb. It has three pairs of side-chambers off set from a medial gallery or passage. The burial chambers open from a

central passage, three on each side and an end chamber. The side-chambers have dry stone walls, which support roofing partly of corbelled and partly of flat slabs, these walls are faced with upright slabs which do not normally reach the ceiling. There are the remains of closing slabs at the entrance, and immediately before the central pair of side chambers. Originally the tomb would have held piles of bones representing many individuals.



English Heritage

The barrow was pillaged, and an entry was forced into the gallery by the farmer in 1760 to get stone to use for road mending.

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The George, Norton St Philip



Photograph by Humphrey Bolton CC BY-SA 2.0

The George was part of a substantial bequest made to the Carthusian monks by William Longspèe. The building is presumed to have been built in 1223 - several years before Longspèe died in 1227. It may be that he had already arranged with the monks to come to Hinton and the guest house at Norton was the first of the monastic buildings which was erected, the Priory being built later. However, some authorities say that the Inn as we see it today was built early in the 15th century.

It seems that it was originally a stone building, and the large upper storey was superimposed on the lower storey to provide a wool store and other accommodation.

Collinson wrote in 1791 that he found at Norton St Philip 'a large and ancient building formerly a grange of the abbots of Hinton'. By grange he meant a farmhouse with barns and granaries for the use of the Priory estate and when you look at the general appearance of the George, it may well be that it was the grange as well as the guest house and inn of the Priory. Every important monastery had a great hall and chambers for the lodging of pilgrims and

travellers and the George is about half a mile from the Priory at Hinton and was certainly their guest house. If it was the earlier building of the two it may have been used by the monks as a residence whilst the Priory was being built.

The surrounding countryside was a great centre of the wool trade and wool was traded at the George.

When Henry VIII destroyed the monasteries and Hinton Charterhouse passed to the Crown, the Priory became a ruin but the George remained as an Inn.

During the Monmouth rebellion the Duke made the George his headquarters.

Today, the George is one of Britain's oldest taverns, offering 13 charming newly decorated ensuite bedrooms - the perfect base to explore the village, Bath and the Somerset surroundings.

Stanton Drew



Steve Keiretsu CC BY-SA 4.0

Stanton Drew has a group of late Neolithic ceremonial monuments, the third largest complex of prehistoric standing stones in England. The largest circle is the Great Circle, a ring of stones 112 metres in diameter with twenty-seven uprights remaining. They are made of local limestone. Geophysical surveys

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revealed the stone ring stands on the inner lip have indicated a circular ditch with a single entrance located to the north-east, being similar to Avebury. Here though the stone circle seems to have replaced a timber structure with nine concentric rings of upright timber posts.

There are another two circles nearby. The North-East Circle is 29.5 metres in diameter and has four stones remaining with an avenue extending eastwards toward the river. The South-West Circle is 44 metres in diameter with ten stones remaining. This is a type of monument built across Britain and Ireland during the late Neolithic period, sometimes called 'square-in-circle' or 'four-poster' sites. It is not yet understood whether these were buildings, raised platforms or some other form of ceremonial structures.



The Cove

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A line projected from the centre of the North-East Circle, through the centre of the Great Circle aligns with the cove. The lumpy and irregular stones are Dolomitic Conglomerate, a coarse-grained rock probably brought here from an area of the Mendip Hills. Ritual ceremonies probably took place here. It is located next to the church, in the back garden of the Druid's Arms pub and comprises two upright stones and a third, now fallen. Again there are analogies with Avebury.

A line projected from the centre of the South-West Circle, again passing through the centre of the Great Circle and continuing northwards across the river Chew, lines up with the final element in the complex - Hautville's Quoit, a large standing stone which has fallen and can be difficult to find!

The circles were first noted by the antiquarian John Aubrey in 1664. He recorded that the villagers were breaking stones with sledgeshammers and was told that several had been removed in recent years. The first detailed map and drawings were made by William Stukeley in 1723.

Dolebury Iron Age Hillfort



Photograph by John Thorn CC BY-SA 2.0

This is probably the finest hillfort on the Mendip hills. It is roughly rectangular in plan. The defences are built entirely of stone, some being very large. The main vallum of stonework varies from 4 to 7 metres high outside and from 2 to 6 metres on the inside with a ditch and another bank outside. There are slight additional outworks cutting off the hill 90 metres further east.

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Its position was well chosen, overlooking the avenue of transit from east to west through a gorge in the Mendips at Churchill.

Fragments of pottery, sling-stones, flints, iron spear-heads, Roman and Saxon coins have been found here at various times.

Inside the fort, badly disturbed by 19th century lead-mining, are four long narrow pillow mounts, part of a 17th century or later rabbit warren. Remains of the warrener's house lie within a circular earthwork in the north-east corner.

The site was visited in the early 19th century by John Skinner and surveyed in 1872 by Charles William Dymond. In 1906 the Mendip Lodge Estate, which included Dolebury Warren, was sold. It was first scheduled as an ancient monument in 1929. In 1935 Dolebury Camp was bought by Miss V. Wills of the W.D. & H.O. Wills tobacco company to prevent development. Dolebury Warren was notified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1952. The freehold of 228.96 acres was acquired by the National Trust in 1983.

Radstock

"We will also visit Radstock, which hasn't much going for it." - the original author of our CAS guide leaflet obviously wasn't after a post at the North Somerset Tourist Board. In fact Radstock used to be the centre of the mining industry in the area. The mines have long since gone but there is a small industrial museum which is worth a visit and it has a bookshop and tea room. Plenty of reasons why to visit surely.

CAS visited North Somerset on Saturday 15 May 2004

Highlights from the Magazines

British Archaeology Nov-Dec 2023



Villa Ventorum - A Roman Reconstruction in Somerset

Echolands - A Journey in Search of Boudica

Fifty Years of Protected Wreck Sites

Large-Scale Geophysics in the community - 10 Years of Surveying carried out by Community Archaeology Geophysics Group

What's Left beneath Imber? - Operation Nightingale in a Wiltshire Ghost Village

Capel Soar y Mynydd, Ceredigion - the Remotest Chapel in Wales

Good Decisions, take Time - Listed Buildings

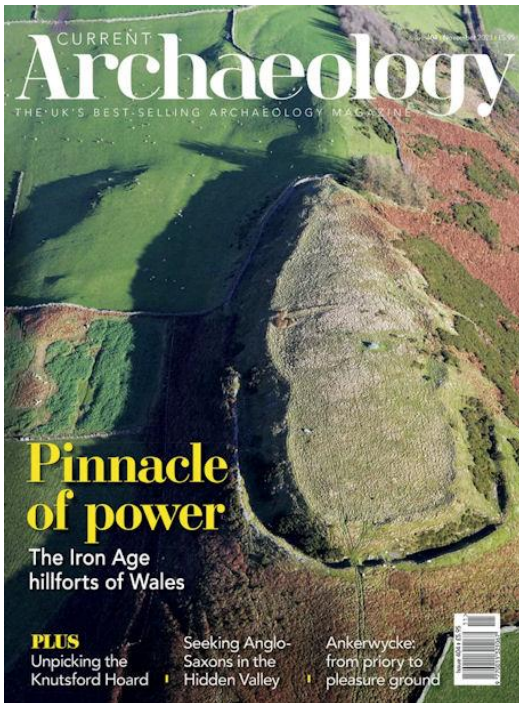
Celebrating Youth Engagement at this Year's Festival of Archaeology

FEATURES

Festival of Archaeology puts Focus on Creativity

Are British Museums in Crisis?

Current Archaeology November 2023



[Plant DNA Successfully Extracted from 2,900-year-old Brick](#)

[The Hidden Valley - Finding Anglo-Saxons in rural Lincolnshire](#)

Breathing New Life into an Anglo-Saxon Brooch - National Museums Scotland, Edinburgh

A Monumental Mystery - Unpicking the evolution of Arthur's Stone

Excavating Ankerwycke - From priory to pleasure ground

Power Of Place - Illuminating Iron Age hillforts in Wales

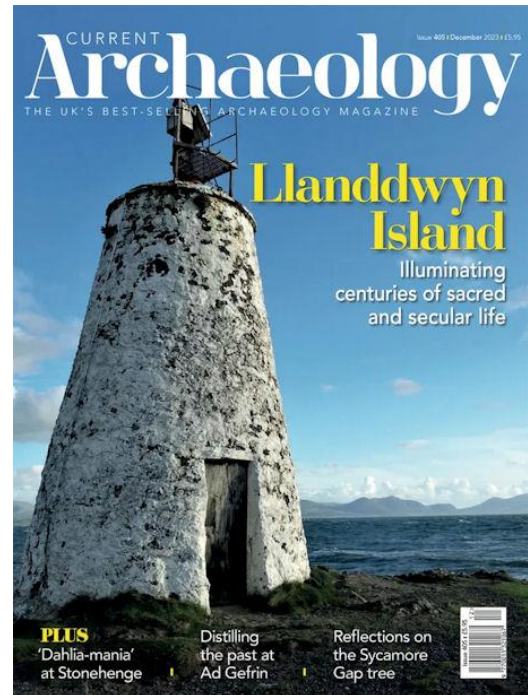
A Cheshire Treasure - Exploring the contents of the Knutsford Hoard

Cardiff Archaeological Society
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Burma to Myanmar - British Museum Exhibition

Odd Socs - National Churches Trust

Current Archaeology December 2023



[Science Notes: Determining the textures and colours of the Parthenon Sculptures](#)

[Highlights from the CARD Fund: Community radiocarbon-dating fund delivers fresh results](#)

Clearing the Cairns - Carn Glass, Inverness

A Victorian Rock Garden - Celebrating 'dahlia-mania' at Stonehenge

Uncovering A Lost Landscape - The archaeology of Llanddwyn Island

Ad Gefrin - Distilling the spirit of Northumbria's Golden Age

Alternative Views - Exploring 'icons' of the Hadrian's Wall landscape

The Tale Of A Tree - An archaeological history of Sycamore Gap

Dec 2023/Jan 2024 Issue

FEATURES

Rooted In The Future - A cultural ecology of the Sycamore Gap tree

Avalon Archaeology - A new open-air archaeological museum in Somerset

Odd Socs - Pipe up for Pipe Organs

World Archaeology Oct-Nov 2023



Ancient Inscriptions in Saudi Arabia

China unearthed - A hidden history of tombs and offerings

Sailing stony seas: Ship graffiti on Malta

Ancient Egypt and the dawn of literature - Revisiting the oldest book in the world

A bitter harvest: Slave labour and sugar on São Tomé

Ventotene - A prison that was a university

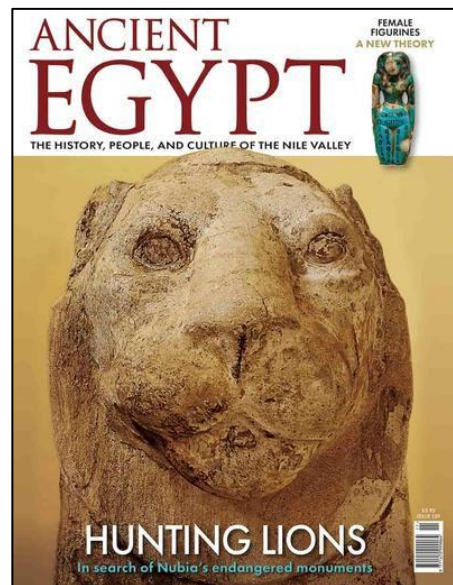
Volos: Archaeology and myth in Thessaly

Naga: the buried royal city

Extreme cold drove early humans out of Europe

Object Lesson - Inscribed amphora fragment

Ancient Egypt Nov-Dec 2023



Mapping Subsurface Saqqara

Crown Prince Ramesses - Pharaoh-in-Waiting

Hathor's Healing Talismans

The Lost Mansion of the Golden Pharaoh

Predynastic Warfare - Violence & Warfare in the Nile Valley

Exotic Colour & Pigments in Early Ancient Egypt

The Origins of Silver, & the Bracelets of Queen Hetepheres I

The Meanings of Life

The Tale of Two Lions

Object Highlight - The Bust of a Ptolemaic Pharaoh

Quiz

1. Name given to an Ancient Mesopotamian temple similar to a pyramid
2. Name given to the medieval crusader states
3. Priest of the ancient Celts
4. King of Wessex who ruled 802 AD to 839 AD
5. Mischievous god of Norse mythology
6. Bronze Age nomadic peoples living on the Steppes north of the Black Sea
7. Astronomical treatise written by Ptolemy
8. US state containing the Swan Point archaeological site
9. Mediterranean island, location of the Minoan palace of Knossos
10. Leslie ..., British archaeologist, author of "Barrow, Pyramid and Tomb (1975)

Past Events

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 on the old Ocky White department store building in Haverfordwest, on behalf of Pembrokeshire County Council.

The archaeologists revealed the remains of a well-used 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.

It seems that the Cemetery was a town cemetery as it contained many infants. An adult burial was found with the arms over the child burial. Other finds included a Picton family floor tile, a lead heart-box in a shield-shape and a small jet chess piece along with a gold belt-type ring.

First recorded in 1246, the friary became a popular pilgrim site having an image of the Virgin with a miraculous taper. After the dissolutions of the monasteries, St. Saviour's disappeared from the landscape, leaving its traces only on names like Friars Lane and the Friars Vault pub.

Much later, an iron foundry was established on the same bank, by the name of the Marychurch Foundry, which imported ingots of iron from one or other of the Welsh foundries established during the Industrial Revolution, and from which were made a huge range of agricultural or domestic metal products.

19th October 2023

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

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

Vicki presented the results of recent work in the Northern Isles of Orkney. Over the past few years new excavations have explored two Neolithic sites;

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Sanday: an early Neolithic settlement at Cata Sand; the house had a well-preserved hearth and finds included bone pins. The site is now flooded.

Just a short distance away, is the chambered tomb at Tresness, a chambered tomb monument under threat located on a cliff edge. This site consisted of in situ heaths and cremations. There was a mass of stone tools and an antler. Artefacts included a polished glacial stone ball. Cremations dated from 3,300 BC. There was also 143 butchery skail knives. At the end of its primary use it was back-filled and a large round mound with a central cist grave placed on top in the Early Bronze Age. The cist contained an 8-year old child 1,890-1,700 BC, but had been earlier robbed out by Antiquarians.

Both 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, accompanied with his wife, Anne Devereux and of his son William, earl of Huntingdon, along with his first wife, Mary Wydeville from the drawings in a late

seventeenth-century family history, the "Herbertorum Prosapia".

Unfortunately, the author, Sir Thomas Herbert of Tintern, had a creative imagination when writing of facts. His drawings therefore do not appear to be completely accurate. Prof. Madeleine Gray explored how Sir Thomas had compiled his drawings from fact and fiction.

Originally William Herbert had wished to be buried at Abergavenny after his death at the Battle of Edgecote in 1465, but ended up being interred in Tintern abbey. Unfortunately of the two effigy tombs at the Abbey's dissolution we have no description.

Born in York in 1606, Sir Thomas had written a work on his travels to Africa and Asia, returning to live with his parents in London. In 1641 he purchased property in Tintern Parva. Supporting Parliament during the English Civil war, he wrote a book on Charles I and his execution. He died in 1682.

By the time of the English Civil, the monuments made of alabaster were unlikely to be in good condition, so Sir Thomas quite likely had to reconstruct their appearance.

Using other contemporary examples still remaining, such as that of the Berkerolles in St Athan and Sir John Lyon at Warkworth, Prof. Madeleine Gray determined the validity of the drawings.

16th November 2023

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

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

Unfortunately Dr. Tim Reynolds had to postpone his lecture as he was unwell. We hope to

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reschedule this lecture in the near future.

16th November 2023

The Neanderthals of Pontnewydd Cave

Dr. Elizabeth Walker, Principal Curator: Collections & Access, National Museum of Wales

Dr Elizabeth Walker kindly stepped in to fill the vacant spot with a talk on her excavations with Prof. Stephen Aldhouse Green 1986-1995.

The cave was originally referred to as Cefn Cave by Rev Stanley when discovered in 1833. It was known as Pontnewydd Cave following its investigation by Thomas McKenny Hughes in 1874. Used as an ammunitions store during the Second World War, it had a brick wall and grills added. In 1966 a local caving group dug some small trenches. A tooth and some bones had been found that looked "ancient". Prof. Chris Stringer of the Natural History Museum thought the tooth to be of a Neanderthal.

A stalagmite floor covering was used to date the stratigraphy of the cave. The cave excavations of 1986 used many techniques that have become commonplace today, such as Uranium series and thermoluminescence dating methods, the latter being the process in which a mineral emits light while it is being heated.

Many animal types were found amongst the numerous bone finds, such as cave bear, lions, leopards, and Rhinoceros and rodents such as voles and lemmings. Some bones showed cut marks which had happened in skinning. Horse bone showed charring. All these animal types showed that the environment at the time was open steppe.

The 17 human remains comprised of a minimum of 5 individuals ageing from 8½ to one adult. The teeth showed wearing due to gripping of material between the teeth. They also had pitting which shows a hard lifestyle and some starvation. Were they related? In 2014 DNA extraction was not possible; a life-sized model was constructed of a boy child and is presently on display at St Fagans.

Over 2,000 stone tools were found, mostly from local stone including handaxes early in the sequence of development,. A flint cleaver had been made from a small deposit transported by ice flow from Scotland or Ireland. Stone knapping waste was found close to the cave.

Future Events

Lectures

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.

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14th December 2023 ZOOM ONLY

A Different Type of 'Viking': Life in Ireland's Viking-Age Towns.

Dr, Rebecca Boyd, Senior Research Archaeologist, IAC Archaeology.

The stereotypical 'Viking' is usually a hairy, male warrior, intent on destruction, pillaging and looting. But this is not the 'Viking' who is associated with the 10th, 11th and 12th century occupation in Viking-Age Dublin, Cork, and

Waterford. In this lecture, we will explore the houses and streets of these Viking-Age towns and consider the lives and lifestyles of those who lived, worked and died in Viking-Age Ireland.

11th January 2024

The 'Trelai Dig 2022/23' - An update on the site and findings.

Dr. Oliver Davis Senior Lecturer in Archaeology and Civic Mission, Co- director CAER Heritage Project.

Prof. Niall Sharples Professor of Archaeology, SHARE, Cardiff University.

The Bronze Age in south Wales is represented primarily by burial monuments and metalwork hoards while settlements have proved much more elusive. This lecture will provide an update on new work undertaken by Cardiff University's CAER Heritage in the environs of the large Iron Age hillfort of Caerau on the outskirts of Cardiff. Excavations in the summer of 2022 and 2023 in Trelai Park, around 1 km from the hillfort, revealed evidence of a hitherto unknown Middle Bronze Age settlement. The site is remarkably well-preserved providing a rare opportunity to investigate the daily lives of Cardiff's Bronze Age residents. We will review

the results of the excavations and consider its broader context and significance.

25th January 2024

Early prehistoric occupation at Wogan Cavern, and why the site is so special.

Dr. Rob Dinnis.

Visiting Researcher, British Museum

Recent test excavations at Wogan Cavern (Pembroke Castle) have revealed impressive evidence for several early prehistoric occupations. Although only a small volume of deposits has so far been excavated it is already clearly a site of national and international significance. In this talk this recent work and discoveries are outlined, and the site's importance is explained with reference to current gaps in our knowledge of the last Ice Age in Britain.

Links to Websites

Recorded Previous Lectures:



Duke Alexander and his Sarcophagi

by Professor Aidan Dodson FSA

Alexander Hamilton, FSA, 10th Duke of Hamilton (1767-1852), was one of the great collectors of his day, whose pretensions, wealth and collections of art led to his being dubbed 'Il Magnifico'. Among his possessions were two anthropoid stone sarcophagi - the only Egyptian antiquities he ever owned. One belonged to

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Pabasa, a late 7th century BC Steward of the God's Wife of Amun at Thebes. The other had been made for a 3rd/2nd century BC lady named Ireতির, and had been acquired by accident, as the culmination of a series of mutual misunderstandings between the duke and the British Museum, of which he was a Trustee. The sarcophagus of Pabasa is now in the Kelvingrove Museum & Art Gallery in Glasgow, but that of Ireতির has rested since 1921 under the soil of a cemetery in the duke's home town, southeast of Glasgow - containing the mummified body of Duke Alexander

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbmbpaRa6ns&list=PLGOCpw7BaRwUD3XrSwNMzU6So3PBIInN49&index=5>



Historic Landscapes of Cheddington, Buckinghamshire

by **Martin Watts, Cotswold Archaeology's Director of Research and Engagement**

Cheddington lies in the Aylesbury Vale in Buckinghamshire, just north of the Chilterns. Excavations here in 2018 revealed archaeological remains from the Late Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods. This webinar will present these remains and discuss their place in the historic landscape of the village.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rw38vySI-0I>



An Evening With National Trust Archaeologists 2023

by **Duncan Coe, HART Project Manager, National Trust; Nathalie Cohen, Archaeologist, National Trust; Mark Newman; Gary Webster, Heritage Officer, Changing Chalk Partnership/National Trust**

A fantastic opportunity to hear about the rich and diverse archaeological sites cared for by the National Trust and the varied work of the National Trust's Archaeologists.

The event features four presentations:

Smallhythe discoveries

Smallhythe is perhaps best known as the home of famous Victorian actress Ellen Terry but recent archaeological excavations by the National Trust and Archaeology South-East have shown that activity at the site stretches back over 2,000 years. In the medieval period, the site was used for shipbuilding, with a number of royal vessels built there for Henry V and Henry VIII during the 15th and 16th centuries. As a unique survival of a medieval shipbuilding site, Smallhythe is highly significant for the study of nautical archaeology of the period. We have also uncovered evidence showing Roman activity at the site, including tiles stamped with the sign of the Roman fleet - The Classis Britannica.

Beningbroughs rediscovered

Beningbroughs rediscovered will look at the archaeological work taking place beside Beningbrough Hall, eight miles north of York. Following initial investigations with Channel 4's Great British Dig in July 2021, work is currently underway to discover more about the creativity of Beningbrough's seventeenth century gardens before they are "put beyond investigation"

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under a brilliant new garden designed by RHS Gold medal winner Andy Sturgeon.

Changing Chalk partnership

Changing Chalk is a partnership of organisations focused on restoring lost habitats, bringing histories to life, and providing new experiences in the outdoors across the South Downs landscape. Looking at the formation of the Downland, we will look at how people have used the Downs, and the monuments that they have built on them. Part of this partnership is the Monument Mentors project which seeks to undertake condition surveys of the monuments on the Downs, and the Downs From Above project, which examines new data, archaeology mapped from aerial photos and LiDAR surveys in the downland to the North of Brighton.

Heritage and Archaeology Ranger Team (HART) initiative

Heritage and Archaeology Ranger Team (HART) initiative will look at the role of volunteers in supporting the work of Archaeologists at the National Trust. This will be set out in the context of the Trust's conservation objectives and the wide range of the archaeological resources that it cares for.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDL1Vpa5FuE>



This series of online talks covers a huge range of incredible discoveries, including Roman amulets, a brand-new Romano-British pottery industry, and a prehistoric frog mystery. Join our experts to uncover the incredible archaeology of the A14, from osteology to environmental archaeology.

The archaeological programme for the Cambridge to Huntingdon National Highways scheme is being carried out by A14 Integrated Delivery Team on behalf of National Highways.

Life, Death and Magic: artefacts from Iron Age and Roman Cambridgeshire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoU1epS89fw>

Peopling the A14: Life and death in ancient Cambridgeshire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggfBr-5YcwM>

Environmental Archaeology & the A14: sustainability at the heart of economic & environmental change

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dIrxMf5tAck>

Introducing the Lower Ouse Valley Pottery Industry

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5verpUzW1ZE>

A14: A Landscape Through Time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1d7nQee4fg>

Answers to Quiz

1. Ziggurat 2. Outremer 3. Druid 4. Egbert 5. Loki 6. Cimmerians 7. Almagest 8. Alaska 9. Crete 10. Grinsell

