



COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY
CBA Wales/Cymru
CYNGOR ARCHAEOLEG BRYDEINIG

<http://britarch.ac.uk/cbawales>

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WHAT I FOUND ON MY HOLIDAYS

As I family we have spent several summer holidays at the Caerfai Bay Caravan and Camp Site, St David's Pembrokeshire. During my time there I must have walked past a large stone of metamorphic rock shot through with quartz veins positioned at the site's entrance dozens, if not hundreds of times without paying much attention to it, and certainly not noticing anything unusual about it. One day this summer, however, returning to the campsite from the beach in search of one of my daughters' body boards, raking midday sun highlighted what seemed to be several cup-marks on the face of the stone. Closer inspection revealed at least six cup-marks arranged in a circle surrounding a larger deeper one. The owners informed me that the stone had been found close by during drain excavation and that they had set it up at the site entrance as an attractive marker. They had noticed the cup-marks, but were not aware of their significance. Prehistoric rock carving is rare in south Wales, this stone adds to the corpus, and highlights how important archaeological discoveries can still be made, even at unexpected times and in the most unlikely of places.

The cover shows the Caerfai stone.

Ken Murphy, Newsletter Editor

AMGUEDDFA CYMRU - NATIONAL MUSEUM WALES REDISPLAY OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS

Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales's vision is to create a 'World Class Museum of learning'. This centenary year of the museum will see the first multi-period redisplay of the archaeological collections in 30 years. Since the opening of the old galleries in the 1970s, there have been three decades of new discoveries and research, and well as advances in the way in which museums engage with their audiences. The new displays will open on 8th December at National Museum Cardiff. Origins: in Search of Early Wales will allow visitors to explore aspects of early Wales from the arrival of the first humans to the end of the Middle Ages. The exhibition will focus on people and change, through specific themes. Contemporary relevance will be made visually explicit. The past as a spur to creativity -art, photography, sculpture, music, animation - will also have a dynamic presence in the gallery, and include new works commissioned for the exhibition. Some archaeological objects will be displayed for the first time, such as the late 1st -century AD bronze vessel hoard from Manorbier, Pembrokeshire. Loans will include the Red Lady of Paviland and the Trawsfynydd tankard. The new galleries will provide a test bed for the more comprehensive exploration of the archaeology of early Wales in the future, planned for St Fagans.

Mark Redknap

NEWS FROM LAMPETER

Archaeologists from the University of Wales, Lampeter have continued over the summer to work in various places including Devon and Scotland. The Department's research and training excavations at Strata Florida Abbey have continued under the direction of Professor David Austin and Quentin Drew, with the expansion of trenches opened in previous seasons revealing further evidence of the remains of buildings.

We continue to offer a full range of degrees in archaeology and new for this year is a PhD in Applied Archaeology which aims to suit the needs of the professional community. Our professional services in environmental archaeology and dendrochronology are going from strength to strength with funding from major agencies including the Welsh Assembly Government. (see website at www.lamp.ac.uk/uwlas/).

This summer sees the appointment of Dr Carrie Roth-Murray as lecturer in classical archaeology, further enhancing our research in the Mediterranean region while Peter White (formerly Secretary of RCAHMW) joins us as an Honorary Research Fellow. Recent publications of note include David Austin's two volume report on the excavation of Barnard Castle and Paul Rainbird's *The Archaeology of Islands* published by Cambridge University Press. We also have two appointments in a new Centre for Cosmology in Culture.

For further information about the Department visit our Website at www.lamp.ac.uk/archanth/ or phone 01570 424732.

Paul Rainbird, Department of Archaeology & Anthropology



Lampeter students and volunteers work on the Strata Florida Abbey precinct gate-house.

“BLACKLANDS”: A NEWLY DISCOVERED PREHISTORIC AND ROMANO-BRITISH SITE IN WESTERN GOWER.

In 2005, research began into the Roman and early medieval landscape of Gower with the aim of charting the transformation of the landscape across the period from *c.* AD 200 to *c.* AD 800. This work is being conducted under the aegis of the Centre for Historical Research in the University of Wales Newport. The work has received financial support from the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Royal Archaeological Institute and the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies.

One objective of the project is to reconstruct the pattern of Roman settlement in western Gower. Five sites – all identified by the place-name element “black” – have formed the main focus of research to date. At three of them fieldwalking, geophysical prospection and selective small-scale excavation have taken place with excellent results. In 2007, work was concentrated on Blacklands, a field that lies on the eastern flank of Hardings Down. Geophysics revealed a mixed pattern of likely round huts and rectangular buildings; this is strongly reminiscent of prehistoric and Romano-British sites in the Vale of Glamorgan, for example at Whitton. A “banjo” shaped enclosure was also identified.

Excavation in August partially examined one of the rectangular buildings in order to examine its nature and date and also to gauge its state of preservation. Externally the building is 3.8 m. wide and it appears to be around 23 m. long. It is divided into at least three unequally sized rooms. The walls remained as rubble foundations for what was probably a mainly timber building. Finds were restricted to the topsoil and comprised post-medieval pottery, a whet stone and a “pot boiler.”

The team excavated a similar site at New Henllys in 2006. This was the first discovery of a likely Roman farmstead site in Gower since that at Barland’s Quarry in 1960. Others objectives of the project are the identification of probable pre-Angle-Norman church sites and the location of possible *llysoedd*. The former is already at an advanced stage and the latter is to commence later this year.

Jonathan Kissock, University of Wales Newport,

AN INLAND PROMONTORY FORT AT BERRY HILL, NEWPORT, PEMBROKESHIRE

Excavation demonstrated that a small inland promontory fort near Newport might have been abandoned before the defences were completed. The excavation concentrated on the fort’s entrance, which was topsoil stripped exposing the defensive ditch terminals, the area of the gateway, parts of the defensive banks and part of the internal fort area immediately within the entrance.



The north ditch terminal was rock cut and V-shaped, approximately 2m deep. The south terminal was deeper. However, it was unfinished and after plunging down to almost 3m deep at the terminal rapidly shallowed out. The bottom few centimetres of the bank on the north side of the entrance survived; that to the south side had gone. The gateway was a simple, single-phase structure, consisting of a pair of main post-holes with a pair of smaller post-holes set back towards the interior. One of the main post-holes cut through a substantial palisade trench - this was the only evidence for more than one phase of use. No diagnostic artefacts were found, but numerous perforated shale disks of various sizes were discovered in the ditch fills.

Overall, the nature of the defensive ditch, the paucity of artefacts (in particular the lack of Roman Period finds), the absence of houses and other structures and the simple single-phase entrance all suggest an unfinished and lightly used fort. Post excavation analysis may help clarify this issue.

The excavations were undertaken by Cambria Archaeology and the University of York and were partly grant-aided by Cadw.

Ken Murphy, Cambria Archaeology

PARC CYBI, HOLYHEAD, ANGLESEY

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust is carrying out another large strip and map project funded by the Welsh Assembly Government in advance of a business park development. The contractors are Jones Bros, Ruthin, and Atkins are acting as agents for the Government. The development area lies south of Holyhead in an area rich in archaeological monuments. The Trefignath chambered tomb lies on the edge of the development and the Tŷ Mawr

standing stone is in the middle of the area. The early Christian cemetery overlying a Bronze Age barrow, found by the Trust on the route of the A55, is just to the north of the present site.

The story starts in the Early Neolithic, when a large rectangular timber building stood less than 100m west of the chambered tomb. Unfortunately the tomb is poorly dated but it is possible that the first phase of the tomb pre-dates the building, which was aligned on this monument. The subsequent development of the tomb continued the alignment. Excavation of the building has not yet been completed but it is producing considerable quantities of early Neolithic pottery and lithics.

Not far away were a group of Bronze Age pits containing pottery and a stone hammer or macehead. Bronze Age activity is also demonstrated by a ring ditch, yet to be excavated, and a strange ditched enclosure. The latter had deep ditches enclosing a small area and had started as a circular monument before being extended to a rough D-shape. Sherds of pottery provisionally dated to the Bronze Age from the base of the ditch were the only dating evidence. A timber roundhouse situated near the shores of a small marsh may also have been Bronze Age, but this cannot be proved.

Despite the wealth of other features it has been the Iron Age remains that have absorbed most of the time and effort on the site. Positioned where a roundabout is planned and where disturbance cannot be avoided was a stone-built roundhouse settlement. Although not projecting above ground and previously entirely unknown this settlement was remarkably well preserved. It was built on the edge of what would then have been a small lake within a zone of regular flooding. To counteract the flooding the houses were built on stone platforms and considerable areas were covered by deposits of stone to create dry courtyards. There appears to have been one house initially, built on a substantial stone platform, on which a large bonfire seems to have been lit immediately before the construction of the house. This first house was certainly demolished to foundation level before two later houses were built. As well as the roundhouses there were subsidiary structures, one of stone and others of timber.

At its earliest phase the settlement had a stone wall along one side, which seems to have joined one of a series of stone flood protection banks. There was also an impressive megalithic wall running through the middle of the settlement that was used and extended throughout the life of the site. There seems to have been an entrance, defined by ditches, into a large courtyard area, defined by the walls, but the settlement as a whole appears not to have been enclosed.

The houses are particularly large for stone built roundhouses with internal diameters up to 10m. The walls are massive and in several cases have been successively widened. At least two of the houses had opposing entrances

and all but one had an entrance on the northwest side, facing the prevailing winds. This, and features emphasising the entrances, suggest that factors other than practical considerations influenced the layout of the houses.



The large size of the houses and the near complete absence of Roman artefacts suggests the settlement does not date to the Romano-British period. The finds are not diagnostic. There is a fine collection of spindlewhorls and other holed stones, along with other intriguing stone objects but nothing that can be dated. A comprehensive series of radiocarbon dates will be obtained and a date in the earlier Iron Age might not be surprising.

Evaluation trenches showed similar settlement activity in a field to the north-east. It is probable that this is a continuation of the present settlement, although finds of Roman pottery suggest a possible later phase of activity. There may, therefore, be Roman period activity on the site and the post-Roman period is represented by long cist graves. None of these have been excavated on site to date, but a group of three children's graves have been revealed near the ring barrow. Within the last week a small cemetery has been exposed on top of a rounded hill not far from the roundhouse settlement. The possibility that the unexcavated northeast end of the settlement continued in use into the early medieval period is tantalising. It is probable that this settlement will be excavated as part of the current project, and questions of its date and relationship to the excavated portion will be answered.

Work continues and interpretations and discoveries change nearly everyday. Future developments will be reported in this newsletter and elsewhere.

Jane Kenny, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

CAMBRIAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Easter Conference March 28th - 30th 2008

Recording and Conserving Welsh Buildings

The Cambrians are organising this Conference of two and half days of lectures and excursions in Aberystwyth, based at the Llety Parc Hotel, in memory of Vernon Hughes, Cadw conservation architect and notable member of the Association.

The lectures will cover religious buildings, vernacular architecture and seaside resorts - all to be considered under the over-arching theme of their conservation and place in the fabric of modern Wales. All these aspects of Welsh building were of interest to Vernon and are vulnerable today, yet still full of potential. The Conference is aimed at architectural historians and practising architects but will also interest anyone concerned about their built heritage.

For further information contact: Frances Lynch Llewellyn, Halfway House, Halfway Bridge, Bangor LL57 3DG or by e-mail f.m.lynch@btopenworld.com

A CORPUS OF MEDIEVAL INSCRIBED STONES AND STONE SCULPTURE IN WALES

The first two volumes of a major new reference work, *A Corpus of Medieval Inscribed Stones and Stone Sculpture in Wales*, have just been published by University of Wales Press. More than fifty years ago, V. E. Nash-Williams surveyed these important artefacts in his classic study, *The Early Christian Monuments of Wales*. Since then, many monuments have been relocated and a handful lost, seriously damaged or destroyed; many others continue to suffer from weathering. Moreover, nearly 100 new examples have been discovered in Wales and there have been many advances in scholarship. The *Corpus* will provide an up-to-date catalogue of the entire body of this material.

Volume 1 by Mark Redknap and John M. Lewis (Glamorgan, Breconshire, Monmouthshire, Radnorshire and geographically contiguous areas of Herefordshire and Shropshire) and volume 2 by Nancy Edwards (South-west Wales) of the *Corpus* are now available. Nancy Edwards is also preparing the third volume, which will cover north Wales. Each volume contains an extensive introduction and a comprehensive catalogue of the monuments illustrated with photographs and line drawings.

The cover price for each of the first two volumes of the *Corpus* is £70, but University of Wales Press will offer CBA Wales Newsletter readers the two volumes at £112 — a handsome discount of 20 per cent — plus free postage and packaging in the United Kingdom. To order the two volumes, please telephone University of Wales Press on 029 2049 6899 and quote the reference 'CORPUS 2007'. For further information on the *Corpus*, or other University of Wales Press titles, go to the Press website: www.uwp.co.uk

NEWS FROM THE CBA WALES COMMITTEE

The Committee has, as usual, met twice during 2007, in January and June. Between meetings matters have been dealt with by the exchange of emails.

The major event of the year must be the establishment of the first paid post in CBA Wales/Cymru. Over the last few years it had become clear that the level of planning consultations being received, mostly in relation to listed buildings, was too much to be dealt with purely on an unpaid, volunteer basis. With the support of Central CBA in York and a grant to fund the post from Cadw it has been possible to create a part-time post of Conservation Coordinator (Development Officer). Interviews were held in April and Mike Anthony was appointed to the post. Office space is being provided by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum of Wales.

The other major decision this year has been to join in with Cylchgronau Cymru/Welsh Journals Online. This is a National Library of Wales project to digitise and make available via the web Welsh and Wales-related journals covering a wide range of subject areas, including humanities, social sciences, science and technology. Access will be open, free and fully searchable. While welcoming the increased access to the information to be found in *Archaeology in Wales* the committee has been mindful of the need to maintain the value of membership of CBA Wales/Cymru so have set a five volume buffer on volumes being available online (i.e. up to *Arch. in Wales* 40 at the present time). *Archaeologia Cambrensis* and *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* are also due to be digitised as part of the same scheme.

The committee has also focused on the long-term sustainability of CBA Wales/Cymru. While at present income and expenditure remain reasonably in balance there are some threats to the continuation of this situation. On the expenditure side *Archaeology in Wales* is a victim of its own success, growing in the last ten years from 88 pages in 1995 to 228 pages in 2005. While the editors have done sterling work minimizing production and distribution cost, it is inevitably now a considerably more expensive product. At the same time there appears to be a slight but steady decline in membership, with the obvious commensurate reduction in income. This year's increased membership fee for National CBA members is obviously a welcome addition but by thus making opting for CBA Wales/Cymru more expensive than an English region this may prove to have a further detrimental effect on membership numbers. The committee is looking at a two-pronged approach of striving to increase membership and to boost the income in publication grant received for *AinW*. It is clear that *AinW* page rates are low in comparison with other journals.

Evan Chapman, Secretary

WHAT'S IN THE PIPELINE

The construction of the gas pipeline through Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and parts of Glamorgan and Powys has provided a unique opportunity to enhance our understanding of the Welsh landscape with what is essentially a very long evaluation trench 44m wide and 316km long, running from Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire to Tirley in Gloucestershire. The western 209km were managed by RSK Environment for NACAP Land and Marine Joint Venture (NLJV), for National Grid, and the excavations were carried out for RSK Environment by Cotswold Archaeology (CA) and Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd (CAP). It is the discoveries in this 209km section that are highlighted here.

In 2006, on the first stage of the pipeline between Milford Haven and Aberdulais, excavated sites included: a previously unknown 30m-diameter class ii henge; a bronze age wooden canoe or trough in association with a burnt mound; numerous other burnt mounds, including one that may have a definite industrial function; a segmented Neolithic enclosure; a standing stone with a Bronze Age timber house close by; a barrow with multiple cremations in pots; an iron age round house and four poster; a ditched enclosure with internal structures and other archaeological minor sites. Reports on these discoveries will appear in *Archaeology in Wales*.

This year (2007) was just as interesting and exciting, with archaeology being discovered along the second stage of pipeline between Felindre in Glamorgan and Brecon. Archaeological finds in Glamorgan and excavated by CAP included: a sub-circular prehistoric house; a cairn that had been damaged during the laying of a pipeline in the 1970s and re-covered over; and a recumbent stone buried in a pit. Where the pipe crossed over the lower part of Cefn Drum, a large number of undated clearance cairns were uncovered along with some segmented walling. One section of the walling contained the remains of a 13th century pottery vessel.

In Carmarthenshire, stripping along the route, uncovered an unexpectedly large number of burnt mounds, three of which had troughs with them. The remains of a circular prehistoric house, was found next to a burnt mound and both were in close proximity to a circular enclosure near Gelli Aur whose edge was just clipped by the working width of the pipeline. The edge of another unknown double ditched enclosure near Llandeilo was also located during a watching brief, while Geophysics identified a much larger 60m diameter enclosure near Cwmifor which was subsequently avoided by re-routing the pipeline away from it. An unusual and possibly early example of a brick baffle kiln was located near Manordeilo and a fine example of a stone-built corn-drier near Llandeilo was excavated and preserved *in situ*. All the sites were excavated by CAP who also carried out the watching brief.

Archaeological work on Mynydd Myddfai by CA uncovered two sites, one dating from the Late Neolithic and the other from the Late Mesolithic. The sites had been identified through archaeological test pits combined with Palaeoenvironmental work (undertaken by James Rackham and Martin Bell). The test pit excavations identified charcoaled hazelnut shells, flints and buried soil horizons and these areas were carefully monitored during turf and soil removal. Over 450 pieces of flints, including tools and waste flakes were recovered from the excavation of the two sites and from the watching brief work. The late Neolithic site had possible stake-built structures and hearths, and the late Mesolithic site had hearths and two shallow semi circular gullies which may have been structural.

Archaeological work in Powys by CA brought the pipeline firmly into contact with the Roman Period with the pipeline encountering unexpected large sections of a Roman road around the Brecon y Gaer Roman fort. Stripping along the pipeline also located prehistoric activity, with a small group of cremations being uncovered near Crai and three houses on a ridge below the hillfort at Pen y Grug. A copper dagger was also excavated from a truncated ring barrow near Trecastle. The dagger probably dates to the very early part of the Bronze Age, c.2400BC. It has been cleaned and conserved by Phil Parkes of Cardiff University.



Overall the excavations and watching briefs along the route of the pipeline will eventually make a major contribution to our understanding of Wales' past. The well-stratified nature of the deposits and the presence of directly datable residues will allow this assemblage to be used by future researchers. A detailed post-excavation publication report of the results is planned.

Neil Fairburn – Archaeology Project Manager RSK Environment for NACAP Land & Marine

BANGOR BEFORE DEINIOL

Bangor is a small town in a sheltered valley close to the entrance to the Menai Straits. Its history is regarded as starting with the foundation of an ecclesiastical community by Deiniol in the 6th century AD. Little is known of any prehistoric activity within the area of the town, apart from finds of an Early Bronze Age urn on the hillside nearby and a bronze palstave and mould a little further up the valley. Recently Gwynedd Archaeological Trust, with funding from the Environment Agency, has been excavating the line of a new river culvert close to the Cathedral of St. Deiniol. Over 2m of deposits have been found with a succession of medieval and post-medieval soils and structures. More surprisingly, in two places at the base of the deposits were burnt mounds. The unusual depth of deposits over them has allowed good preservation and associated assemblages of butchered animal bone, including cattle and sheep, have been recovered. The indication therefore is of a domestic cooking function. This is the first time that such evidence has been found in secure association with burnt mounds and this should provide a basis for wider interpretation. Radiocarbon dates and bone analysis will be of great interest.

George Smith, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

FREE BACK NUMBERS OF ARCHAEOLOGY IN WALES!!!!

We need to reduce our stock of back numbers because of the amount of space they occupy and the fact that apart from the most recent volumes, AiW will be available on line in the near future. Your committee has decided that rather than pulp excess stock, we should firstly offer volumes to members, free of charge, other than the cost of postage.

The following volumes are available: **6,19,27,29-44 inc.** Vol. 45 is also available but at the full price of £8. Postage for a single volume is £2. As an indication, the complete available run, at a standard parcel rate, would be £15.

A certain number of back copies will be available on a first come first served basis at our meeting in Shrewsbury in October. If you would like to reserve volumes for collection at the Shrewsbury meeting, please let me know and I will bring them along.

This offer is extended only to members of CBA:Wales. However, non-members can acquire back numbers at a heavily discounted price. The discount is negotiable and depends on the number of volumes ordered.

Contact details: cdeaney@carmarthenshire.gov.uk 01267 242300