

Introduction

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I am, as always, very pleased to be able to sketch an introduction to this Review of the Trust's archaeological work during the year 2000/2001. It comes as no surprise to me that this is the fullest *Annual Archaeological Review* that we have published so far. Indeed, each year, the range of archaeological activities expands and we have been able to publish more and more case studies related to the core work of the Trust, such as research and conservation, education and learning, planning and development. This is a sure indication of just how fully the Trust's work in archaeology and the wider historic environment is integrated into its many and varied activities.

As well as the reviews of what has been happening in the Regions, the *Review* includes two pieces from Chedworth and Dolaucothi on the importance of conservation plans, a paper on the Trust's involvement in the projects surrounding Stonehenge, and two pieces on metal detectors and metal detecting.

The value of developing a conservation plan for Chedworth Roman Villa is explained by Philip Bethell, the Chedworth Property Manager. Detailed conservation and other archaeological surveys have been undertaken or are ongoing and a detailed understanding of the physical requirements for the conservation of the site has been developed. At the same time, the property staff have built up a close understanding of the needs and interests of the many visitors to the villa. In particular, Chedworth has a very high proportion of schools visits. The process of preparing the Conservation Plan has enabled Philip, as its author, to bring together the whole range of information about the significance of the site, the issues which affect it and its many visitors, and to develop clear principles for its conservation and management. The process of consultation was exemplary. Initial consultation was followed up with a conference held at Lodge Park last January to present the draft plan, to discuss its wider conservation context and to receive comments and debate issues in preparation for the final version. Attendees included members of the Archaeological and Architectural Panels, representatives of English Heritage and the Local Authorities, neighbours and experts on tourism, education, archaeology and museums. It was a great success. Now, Philip has produced the Management Plan for Chedworth following on from the agreed principles set out in the Conservation Plan, and this too is undergoing a formal process of consultation even as we go to press. Chedworth is one of the most important Roman villa sites in Britain, and we look forward to the implementation of the new plan and the necessary development to improve conservation, presentation and visitor services that must surely follow.

Emma Plunkett Dillon, Archaeologist in Wales, presents a clear case for the same sort of approach for the important Roman and later gold-mines at Dolaucothi. Ongoing research and survey, wide academic consultation including an involvement with a team of European specialists, and a new assessment of the site has emphasised the international importance of Dolaucothi. It is now essential that this recognition of the pre-eminent value of the property is properly reflected in its conservation and management. A full conservation plan is essential in guiding a subsequent management strategy so that we can look forward to developments which properly respect the extraordinary quality of this special place.

Stonehenge has scarcely featured in the pages of the *Review* in the past, despite the Trust's considerable involvement over many years in developing a strategy for its future. Keith Rowe, the Trust's Stonehenge Project Officer, redresses the balance in his review of the complex planning activity that is currently being undertaken for the Stonehenge World Heritage Site (WHS). This year saw the appointment by the Trust and English Heritage of an Implementation Officer to the World Heritage Site at Stonehenge. Isabelle Bedu, the new appointee, had just completed the WHS Management Plan for Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal before embarking on the Stonehenge project. The Trust has been instrumental in taking the lead on the development of a Land Use Plan for the core of the World Heritage Site, which

will run alongside the implementation of the WHS Plan. The other major activities at Stonehenge include the development by English Heritage of proposals for the Visitor Centre and work with the Highways Agency on the proposed improvements to the roads through the site. English Heritage has appointed its architects and other specialist consultants for the Visitor Centre scheme. The architects are an international company, Denton Corker, Marshall from Australia, of particular interest to me as they designed the marvellous Museum of Sydney, run by the Historic Houses Trust for New South Wales, and where I worked for three wonderful months in 1999. If the Stonehenge Visitor Centre is as good as MOS then we can expect a very exciting project; preliminary designs certainly look good. On the Highways front, the Agency is appointing contractors for the design of new schemes and a considerable amount of work has been done on the development of a full Environmental Impact Assessment. 2002 is likely to be a very busy year for the Trust's Stonehenge team in the lead up to the publication of highway orders and the inevitable, subsequent public inquiry.



The head set at the Gold Mine (Dolaucothi), viewed through the trees.

NTPL/ANDREW BUTLER

The two papers on metal detecting, by Michael Lewis, Finds Liaison Officer for Kent and by Caroline Thackray, set out the Trust's position on metal detecting in the light of the Treasure Act and its recent review and the developing Portable Antiquities Scheme. A full policy statement is currently being prepared, and will form part of a portfolio of policy and position statements on various archaeological matters, which will help to define our working standards and best practice for the Trust. Michael Lewis describes a field project involving the Trust and local metal detectorists in Kent. This was an exciting opportunity to work with others and a good precedent for future, carefully planned surveys of a similar nature.

Throughout 2000 we worked very closely with English Heritage in the extensive consultations surrounding the preparation of *Power of Place*. Now, a year later, we are still awaiting the Government's response to the document. We are also working actively with many other organisations in the heritage sector on the establishment of an umbrella organisation – 'Heritage Link'. This new grouping will address the government's criticisms of fragmentation in the sector and will enable us to raise the profile of our work across the whole range of cultural heritage activities and to be a stronger force in influencing government. We will be able to say more about this next year.

The quality of work presented in this *Review* is a tribute to the skills and hard work of the Trust's archaeological staff. I am deeply grateful to them all for demonstrating the relevance of archaeology and the historic environment to the Trust's work and responsibilities, and for helping to bring it alive for the benefit of our staff and visitors. The report includes many examples of partnership working with other organisations and individuals. This must be the way forward to build on the many opportunities that the Trust's enormous archaeological resource offers.

Simon Timms (Archaeology Panel) presenting a Harry Juniper (Bideford) traditional North Devon Slipware jug to Isabel Richardson on her retirement.

CAROLINE THACKRAY/NATIONAL TRUST



I would also like to convey my thanks to the members of the Trust's Archaeology Panel, who continue, regularly to offer us advice and wise counsel. In particular, I would like to thank Nick Johnson who retired as a long standing Chairman of the Panel in 2001, and Professor Angus Buchanan, who took on the Chairmanship following Nick's retirement and who, himself retires at the end of this year. I am sure that we will continue to work closely with them both in the coming years. The Panel's new Chairman will be Simon Timms, who has been a Panel member since the Panel was formed in 1989.

Last but by no means least, 2001 saw the retirement of Isabel Richardson, who had worked on the vernacular buildings and historic landscape Surveys in Devon and in West Somerset over many years. Isabel is an inspired building archaeologist, but very fortunately we have not lost her altogether and are delighted that she is still working for the Trust as a consultant on similar projects in Devon.

I do hope that you will enjoy reading this *Review*.