

GRAPHIC ARCHAEOLOGY



NEWS UPDATE: SUMMER 2014

Dear Graphics Archaeology Group member,

Since the last newsletter in March we have made progress on several projects. First off, the proposal for a rebuild and replacement of the GAG website has been agreed and Tom Small has been working hard on this with Rory Morrison. Trials of the new gallery will be tested over the next few weeks ready for a relaunch in late Summer/ Autumn. Please see Tom's article about the website and gallery later in this news update.

The GAG session at conference was very well attended, and we have had a lot of positive feedback about the Exhibition – thanks to Sarah, Drew, Graeme and Tom for getting it sorted out, set up and packed away. The 'Meet the Illustrator' sessions did not work as planned; we ended up having informal discussions in the breaks with whoever happened to be next to their images at the time but we intend to tighten up the timetabling and have an info sheet/informal catalogue available for next year. Criteria for future submissions will be circulated. In addition we are revisiting the possibility of digital content – either through projection or digital screen to supplement the existing prints and frames and reduce costs.



Illustrations by Graphics Archaeology Group members Mark Gridley and Jennie Anderson on display at the IfA Conference earlier this year. Photographs courtesy of Martin Newman.

The AGM took place at the Conference; the minutes are up on the GAG page of the IfA website and we can report Drew Smith was elected to GAG committee. Thanks to everyone else who has helped out over the last year, especially Sarah Lucas (Exhibitions) who has temporarily had to step down and Rob Read after all his exceptional work in setting up GAG. The current GAG Committee members are therefore as follows:



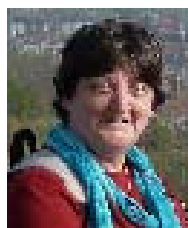
STEVE ALLEN
CHAIR

Steve is Archaeological Wood Technologist at York Archaeological Trust. As well as Chairing the Graphic Archaeology Group he is also a member of the IfA Validation Committee.



LAURA TEMPLETON
TREASURER

Laura is head of the Graphics office at Worcestershire ACS Archaeology Unit. As Treasurer she is responsible for tracking the Group's budget and expenditure.



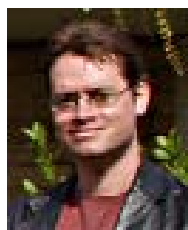
LESLEY COLLETT
SECRETARY

Lesley is Graphics and Publications Officer at York Archaeological Trust. In between organising meetings and taking minutes she supports the work of other committee members.



LEEANNE WHITELAW
TRAINING

Graphics Manager at CFA Archaeology. Leeanne hopes to organise training to bridge the gap in skills from traditional methods to cutting edge technology.



TOM SMALL
WEBSITE EDITOR

Tom has been busy updating the former AAI&S website and web gallery for use by GAG. He is also a point of contact for illustrators and surveyors working in multimedia; contact him on any issues in



ELIZABETH GARDNER
ASSESSMENTS

Liz is a freelance illustrator based in Cambridgeshire, and is currently reviewing and revising our guidance notes for new starters in graphics work.



JENNIE ANDERSON
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jennie is a freelance illustrator based in Swindon, Wiltshire, and also works for English Heritage. She has taken over the Editorship of the GAG Newsletter.



DREW SMITH
ASSESSMENTS & PUBLICITY

Drew is a freelance illustrator based in Glastonbury, Somerset. Drew is co-opted to the Committee of the Graphic Archaeology Group.

We agreed a three-year business plan for GAG with a series of targets and priorities. The business plan sets out our aims for the next few years but should not be thought of as the final word on our activities! We also intend to exploit any opportunities that arise in the meantime...

Funding for the website redesign has been agreed but in order to do this we have had to put the research and evaluation of online training project on hold for this year. We decided that the website, as the showcase for the Group, has to take priority. A resubmission for the online training review will be prepared for the next business year.

Steve Allen
Chair, Graphics Archaeology Group

Amending artwork

Some of you may recall from the last issue the mention of an issue where a copyright holder had amended the finished and previously published artwork prepared by an illustrator without notifying the original artist. It is recognised that there may be legitimate reasons for undertaking such amendments - in the light of new interpretations and new evidence, for example. However to do so without attempting to contact the original artist - or offering that artist the opportunity to amend their own work - is extremely discourteous and highly unprofessional. All members are referred to the IfA Code of Conduct -and the Principles within it that apply. Amending artwork.amend their own work - is extremely discourteous and highly unprofessional. All members are referred to the IfA Code of Conduct - and the Principles within it that apply.

Validation news

An Assessment panel was held on 14th June at which one candidate was assessed. A recommendation went forward to Validation committee and at the meeting on 1st July, we are happy to report that Dr Shelly Werner of CfA successfully became a MIfA.

This was the first full trial of the GAG assessment panel and worked very well. Candidates for IfA corporate membership or upgrades who have a Graphics background are encouraged to apply for assessment as part of their application. The candidate is invited to attend an assessment panel where they will present their portfolio of work and discuss it with the panel. The panel then considers the application and discusses their views on the portfolio with the candidate, giving them feedback on the work submitted. The panel then prepares a confidential recommendation for the Validation committee which is reported to the next meeting at which the candidate is considered. Validation committee make the final decision and the result is communicated to the candidate as normal.

What we intend to do is set up a series of fixed dates across the year on which assessment panels will be convened. A number of candidates- at least two and ideally four- are needed to make the assembly of the panel cost effective. The process will be demand led- if no candidates are forthcoming a panel will not be assembled. So to make this work, we need applicants. If you are considering upgrading your membership or if you know someone who wishes to become a member please contact IfA office who will put you in touch with our assessment officers!

That Bulgarian Opportunity...

Back in the late spring IfA office circulated a request from Professor Andrew Poulter of Nottingham University to GAG Members. Professor Poulter wanted to recruit two experienced illustrators to work on small finds and pottery for a five-week season in Bulgaria. Though no wages could be offered, all expenses including travel, subsistence and accommodation would be paid for and this was quite openly stated.

On past experience this is the sort of opportunity that many of our colleagues have taken up and enjoyed, partly as a break from the day-to-day routine, partly for those wanting to gain more experience, partly to fill in time between paid contracts and partly to make new contacts which could help them in the future. Whilst GAG would not endorse this as a model for long-term full-time employment, many academic projects like this are run on very small budgets and we need to recognise that some of our members might be interested in undertaking this work. An earlier season on this same project has indeed been posted up on the BAJR website without drawing adverse comment. It is therefore quite appropriate to bring this opportunity to the attention of the GAG membership and we would do so again.

It was therefore quite a surprise to read in the last copy of the Diggers Forum newsletter that DF had challenged the circulation of this request- without talking to GAG first! We only heard about this through a copy of the DF newsletter which was forwarded to GAG Chair in connection with an entirely unrelated matter. Indeed, four months on, GAG committee has still had no word from DF. It is extremely disappointing that we did not have the opportunity to talk to DF first and sort this out. In the meantime, GAG would hope that this was a one-off and unintended oversight that will not happen again.

And Finally!

GAG corporate members are reminded of the IfA CPD requirement- that you undertake at least 50 hours of CPD in any 2 year period, that your PDP and CPD log are kept up to date and are available for inspection at the request of IfA! It is not difficult to accrue CPD and the IfA bulletin often contains articles by members on how they approach their CPD. It does not have to be restricted to taking formal courses or be directly related to your daytime employment. Corporate members may be randomly selected to send in copies of their PDP and CPD logs so do make sure yours is up to date!

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are now all in the final year of their three-year term, and it is important that new members continue to come forward for committee, not only to bring in new blood and new ideas and prevent stagnation, but to give the long-serving committee stalwarts a bit of a rest! Please consider standing for election to any vacancies on GAG committee; nominations will be sought in March 2015.

**To express an interest in becoming a Committee member, please contact us at:
issig@archaeologists.net**

IfA Conference, Glasgow Marriott, 9th–11th April 2014

A long overdue visit to Scotland made this well worth attending – AAI&S visited Edinburgh in 2007 but this was an opportunity for members north of the border to meet up without incurring massive travel expenses!

The discussion session 'Research in Practice: The Graphic Image in Current Archaeological Research' was titled to tie in with the conference theme of 'Research in Archaeology', but of course looking at this from our particular perspective.

We had four speakers - Dr. Graeme Earl from the University of Southampton explained the use of 'Graphics As Massive Open Online Communicators' - the use of the internet and social media to disseminate archaeological information and facilitate publication through the use of graphics. In many of the medium and smaller archaeological units (and maybe some of the larger ones!) I don't think this has caught on in quite the way it should. The opportunities to publicise our work and engage with our audiences here are being missed and we really need to reconsider our approach. Simply uploading a print publication to a website rather misses the point and potential of the media! To find out more about Massive Open Online Communicators (MOOCs), see: www.southampton.ac.uk/moocs

The continuing value of careful observation and hand drawn recording was really brought out in John Borland's paper 'Recording Scotland's Early Medieval Sculpture In The 21st Century: Why Draw?'. Reliance on photography and basing publication drawings on poor reproductions of such photographs has led to misinformation and poor interpretations of otherwise well-known monuments. Measured drawings have been central to the work of the RCAHMS in adding value to the archaeological record. Maintaining good observation skills and traditional drawing techniques has produced greatly enhanced records and permitted the reinterpretation of many Pictish stones.

3-D visualisation techniques are currently very much in vogue and I have been asked on several occasions to recommend to a client that a particular object or structure should be 'laser scanned' to produce a visual record. Of course, there is much more to 3D visualisation than laser scanning. From the University of Bradford, Andy Holland's paper 'Archaeological 3D digital imaging: More than just recording and pretty pictures?' should be required reading for anyone thinking of commissioning such work. The need to identify proper research aims and objectives, establish a rigorous methodology, and select the right technique for the subject, is essential if the images are to be used to investigate the subject as well as depict it.

Finally, Ingrid Shearer of Northlight Heritage took us through a local project 'Re-imagining the Govan Stones' - a collection of 9th–11th Century sculptured stones commemorating

the Kings of Strathclyde. This was an intriguing project – promoting and redisplaying an important corpus of monuments from a kingdom unfairly obscured by better known peoples and without a strong popular identity. Developing a unique visual style and at the same time engaging the local community as part of this process was a challenge whose success can be judged by the popularity of the new exhibition and the increased profile of the subject. See: www.thegovanstones.org.uk

The session was very well attended – standing room only – and generated a lot of discussion afterwards. Next year we will be in Cardiff; the theme of the conference is ‘The Future of Your Profession’, and the session proposal from the GAG will be on the way in by the time you read this update. We have identified some potential speakers but would welcome others, especially from the graphics community in Wales! If you would like to offer a paper, please get in touch ASAP by e-mailing: issig@archaeologists.net

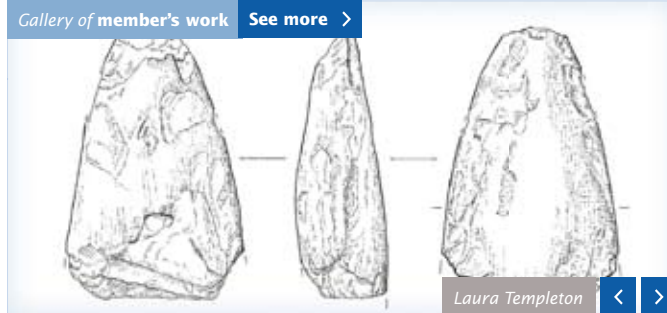
What’s happening with the GAG website and gallery?

A few members have recently been in contact to enquire about the existence (or rather non-existence, as it currently stands) of the GAG gallery. The Gallery is of course the ‘shop-window’ for the GAG and for individual members so it is appreciated that members are particularly concerned about its lack of presence. So, what’s been happening and when can we see the gallery back up and running?

Following ‘technical issues’ the gallery has been removed by the service provider. In view of the fact that the website as a whole was initially developed over ten years ago and has not received any substantial attention since then, GAG put forward a proposal to IfA – since approved - that the website be re-developed within WordPress (a content management system). A re-development within WordPress will allow efficient updating of the website and provide an excellent opportunity to improve the gallery, allowing members to display substantially larger images of their work.

This work is currently being undertaken ‘behind the scenes’ by myself (Thomas Small) and web developer Rory Morrison. The gallery system is being fine-tuned and, once we are satisfied, all members eligible to display their images within the gallery, (all corporate IfA members), will receive an invitation via email to submit a selection of up to 12 images. A guidance document describing how images should be prepared for submission will also be provided. We are optimistic that the work should be completed by the end of September/early October, and we look forward to presenting a refreshed and fully functioning website that we can all be proud of.

Thomas Small
Website Editor



Search... GO

Latest Newsletter

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The Graphic Archaeology Group is an IfA Special Interest Group representing all those visualising archaeological data, focusing on issues relating to standards, training and employment whilst contributing to the broader discussions on the development of the archaeological profession as a whole.

View our page on the IfA website

View or join our Facebook group

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Please note that the old address of **www.aais.org.uk** has now expired. Please remember to update all of your advertised links to the new address of **www.gag-ifa.org**

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A screen-shot demonstrating the look and feel of the new GAG website, which is currently under development and construction. Image courtesy of Thomas Small.

GAG Committee:

Chair: Steve Allen

Secretary: Lesley Collett

Treasurer: Laura Templeton

Newsletter: Jennie Anderson

Elizabeth Gardner: Assessments

Tom Small: Website

Leanne Whitelaw: Training

Drew Smith: Assessments &
Publicity

Contact details for all GAG matters:

issig@archaeologists.net

GAG

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Newsletter contributions

We welcome contributions of all kinds, whether articles, news or comments. The next GAG newsletter is due out in the late Autumn. Please contact us at: issig@archaeologists.net

Copy deadline for next issue: **31st Oct 2014**

