



## Reading '99



*Delegates bask in unexpected sunshine at a picnic lunch by Whiteknights lake.*

### Forty delegates from all over the UK and Ireland attended this year's AAI&S Conference in Reading; temperatures soared and pints sank.

Those who arrived early were able to visit Reading Museum, where a special viewing of the illustrated excavation notebooks of Rev. Joyce had been arranged. These notebooks, dating from the 1850's, included exquisite watercolour renderings of small finds and views of the excavations of the Roman town at Silchester.

The more energetic of the party then took in a brief tour of Reading's historic sights on the way back to the Conference venue, an Edwardian mock-Tudor college complete with croquet lawn and magnificent timbered dining hall.

After dinner, the first talk of the Conference: Roland Harris described state-of-the-art building recording techniques in use on his recent projects at the Tower of London and Norwich Cathedral. (The basis of Roland's talk will shortly be available as an IFA Technical Paper.)

Saturday was crammed with activity. A short talk by Andy Cross of Reading Uni's Typography Department on the problems of getting resolution right for the printer gave us a few surprises (4800 dpi for linework??) while Mike Middleton gave us some background on the graphics packages available to the print-based illustrator.

Fine weather continued, so fortunately Dr David Sim was able to give a fascinating demonstration of blacksmithing techniques in the open air. He showed how those familiar iron small finds were actually made - and how tiny random differences in the angle of a hammer blow might result in us having to illustrate different 'types' of nails! Several previously nameless "Fe objects" were given an identity as part of the blacksmith's toolkit.

After a picnic by the lake, we adjourned to Wantage Hall for the AGM. Ann Searight agreed to act as Chairman, owing to the illness of Rob Read. Barbara Hurman and Melanie Steiner stood down from Council: five new members were proposed.

On Sunday morning, Barbara Taylor spoke about her work preparing a CD-ROM to accompany the publication of work on the prehistoric sites in the Welsh Severn Estuary, and Mike Pringle gave us a short tour of the AAI&S's new website.

The conference then split into a number of small groups to try some computer graphics packages, and to hear those who had brought display work give short talks about it. The computer workshops were generally considered A Good Idea, and if the Association could organise more training for its membership around the country along these lines, it would be wonderful.

**•Conference 2000 will take place in London: Ann Searight and Barbara Hurman are already working hard on its organisation – see flier enclosed with this issue for information and a questionnaire for potential delegates.**

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Change of Address

Central Mailing has moved, due to the relocation of the Archaeology Department at Exeter.

The new address is:

AAI&S

c/o University of Exeter

Department of Archaeology

School of Geography and Archaeology

Laver Building

North Park Road

EXETER EX4 4QE

**•Membership Secretary Eddie Lyons would like to remind all members to inform him if they are moving.**

### Webnews

The Association's website has been up and running for over six months now, and continues to add links to other related sites, so that more and more people, both in the UK and worldwide, will get to hear about the Association.

The site was originally hosted by the University of Bournemouth, which meant that additions could only be made via their webmaster, and the address was rather complicated. We are now able to announce our own independent site, with the more memorable URL of:

**www.aais.org.uk**

Members are invited to send material for inclusion, especially examples of their work for the 'Images' section of the site. Contact Mike Pringle, for further details, via Central Mailing or by e-mail at [pringle@aais.org.uk](mailto:pringle@aais.org.uk).

# European Association of Archaeologists

Many of you will have been contacted recently to supply artwork for a new AAI&S exhibition. This was displayed for the first time at the European Archaeological Association's conference in Bournemouth in September. *John Hodgson* attended on behalf of the AAI&S, and sends this report:

The fifth annual EAA conference was held at Bournemouth University, and while not rivalling the Labour Party in size it was nevertheless Big. The EAA is a growing concern, and this year there were nearly 800 delegates, many from Eastern Europe and Russia as well as the EEC countries. It was, therefore, an excellent venue for the AAI&S to attend in order to raise awareness of the Association.

This was the first outing for our new display panels, and also for the new selection of more recent work, which various members have donated for exhibition. The Conference exhibition was held over four days in the University sports hall, and comprised about thirty stands. A wide cross-section of public and commercial bodies were represented, including CBA, IFA, English Heritage, The Royal Commission, Highways Agency, Society of Antiquaries, Wessex Archaeology, the Highways Agency and Oxbow Books - the last named being a very dangerous one to go near while holding a cheque-book. Our own display stood comparison with these other stands quite well, particularly in the quality of the content: what we could improve on is the initial and overall impact of the display - as always, we're too modest! More prominent main- and sub-headings, and some larger images would be a great improvement.

In general, the exhibitors felt that the delegate's interest in the displays was moderate but satisfactory, and certainly there were a good many enquiries. A lot of these came from students who have an interest in archaeological illustration: this is of course very important to the future of the AAI&S membership and to the development of the profession - an area we need to encourage.

The majority of delegates had an interest in graphic presentation, but it seems to be an area which is very much taken for granted; its influence and importance are underrated. The presentation of even one paper at this

Conference by a member of our Association would have been invaluable, in attracting attention to our display and to the AAI&S itself. As it was, from the enormous total of nearly 500 papers which were presented during the Conference, only 25 (5% of total) were on subjects which directly concern us; on archiving, publishing, imaging and reconstructions. It is very relevant to note, as an indication of the direction in which these areas are moving, that only one paper dealt with conventional graphics: the other twenty-four concerned digital imaging, publication and archiving.

Overall, a qualified success for our new display's first outing. Some weak points in its presentation have shown up, which are fairly minor and can be remedied. The main lesson of the exercise is just how necessary it is to be present - very obviously, vocally present - at events of this level, if we wish to be as effective and well-known as other organizations in archaeology.

JH

## OBITUARY

### Stewart MacNeill

(1949 - 1999)



Members of the Association will be saddened to learn of the death of Stewart MacNeill, illustrator with the Field Archaeology Section of Essex County Council. Stewart died unexpectedly of a heart attack at the age of 50 in August, shortly after devoting his annual holiday to working on the illustration of small finds at Cressing Temple.

After a first career running his own business as a silversmith and jewellery designer, Stewart discovered archaeology in the mid-1980s, as an excavator on the Stansted Airport project under the direction of Howard Brooks. The illustration of the site plans from Stansted

saw the beginning of a new and successful career in archaeological illustration. He joined the drawing office of Essex County Council Archaeological Section, and over the next years worked on, among many others, North Shoebury, Great Chesterford, and Elms Farm. His work featured in *Essex Archaeology & History*, *East Anglian Archaeology*, and the annual archaeological supplement in the *Essex Chronicle*. He also produced the graphic material for countless booklets, and was invaluable in assisting with the production of exhibitions on display at Colchester Castle and the successive Essex History Fairs. He was a great supporter of this Association, and a regular attendee at annual conferences.

For the last three years Stewart was the principal illustrator, working largely on his own, for the Field Archaeology Section based in Braintree. Initially unsure that he was ready for the responsibility, Stewart blossomed in the job, and became an authoritative and dependable stalwart of the Section, producing work at short notice and to tight deadlines.

Stewart was a quiet and unassuming character who was well liked in any office or site that he worked in. He never became flustered or excited and he was always a calming influence. His unique style of humour livened up any drawing office. He had no trace of egotism and was a supremely reliable member of any project team. Above all he was a kind and caring man who always devoted time and affection to his family and his colleagues. He was generous and could be relied upon to arrive at any party with a bottle of the finest whisky and a cheerful smile.

Stewart was buried with the tools of his archaeological trade in a green plot with no headstone in Maldon: a happy departure, attended by many family members, friends and colleagues, that summed up his belief that we should tread lightly upon the earth and leave no detrimental trace. We will all miss him, but we will all remember him fondly, and continue to learn from the way that he lived his life.

*Alison McGhie*

The Association has also been informed of the death of **Rupert Cook MAAS**: an appreciation will appear in the next Newsletter.

## New Council Members

Five new Members were proposed to Council at the AGM at Reading in September. We take this opportunity to introduce some new and some familiar faces:

### Steve Allen MA MAAIS



I studied archaeology at Leicester and then Birmingham Universities, where I began a long-term involvement with waterlogged wood. Whilst working for the Museum of London, I was invited to write a paper on the illustration of wooden artefacts, which was eventually published as an AAI&S Technical Paper.

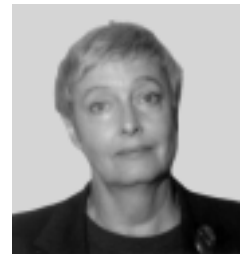
Since 1993 I have worked at the University of Reading, where I am responsible for preparing illustrations for a number of the Archaeology Department's projects, and for teaching an illustration course for undergraduate students. I also supervise field projects, such as the excavation of the mill site at Bordesley Abbey, and the prehistoric intertidal sites of the Severn Estuary. I am interested in increasing the Association's output of Technical Papers and improving standards of training in illustration.

### Deirdre Crone MAAIS

Having trained in Fine Art and Ceramics, archaeological illustration in a museum seemed to be an ideal practical application. After many frustrating years of academic condescension and a total lack of progress or recognition of achievement, it was a godsend to find, in 1977, others with similar problems, a debate that eventually coalesced into the AAI&S.

We must now address a broader range of uses and applications for our work.

Diverse techniques and technologies involve a more varied breadth of expertise and aptitude. All the greater then, the need for a confident and respected association to establish ground rules for illustrators and employers and confirm our status as a distinct and desirable discipline. It is this support and encouragement from my peers which I have found so invaluable and which, in return, from a slightly wider geographical base, I would like to enhance and consolidate the next generation through the AAI&S and its Council.



### Andrew Dutton MAAIS, MIFA



I have been employed by Gwynedd Archaeological Trust in North-west Wales since 1980. During that period I have worked in different capacities on a wide variety of archaeological projects. I am currently Senior Graphics Officer at GAT and am particularly interested in expanding the viability of using different types of computer generated images in the interpretation and presentation of archaeological information. I also undertake field projects where appropriate, and have published reports on Bronze Age mining and metallurgy and technological aspects of the Welsh slate industry. Whilst serving on the Council I am keen to review the existing Association Technical Papers Series with a view to expanding both their range and readership.

### Mike Middleton, MAAIS

Born in Cornwall in 1968, my family soon moved to Shetland where I went to school. I finished my education in Aberdeen before studying archaeology at Glasgow University. On graduating I married Emily and we travelled in Europe, working on excavations in the UK, Italy and France. During our seven years in France I worked for the French State Field Archaeological Service as a digital illustrator. The arrival of the first of our four children in 1996 prompted our return to Scotland where I now work freelance. I specialise in digital graphics and am keenly interested in the use of modern technology within archaeological illustration.



### Jane Russell MAAIS

When I signed up for an evening class in archaeology, my life changed irrevocably. From then on I was hooked, and spent every summer working as a volunteer, gaining experience as an excavator and planner. When the Brighton Bypass Project began I was offered a six-month contract with the Field Archaeology Unit, UCL, and ten years on I am still working with the same unit. Since then my work has developed into the illustration of artefacts and the preparation of plans for publication (using old-fashioned pen-and-ink).



In recent years I have become involved in the teaching of archaeology, particularly of illustration. I think it is important to ensure that a certain standard of illustration is achieved, be it drawn by pen or computer, through available educational services. I would also like to see a more lively approach to the presentation of illustrations in publications, and this involves the 'education' of a considerable number of archaeologists towards illustration methods. I hope to be able to contribute towards the education potential of the AAI&S in the future.

**Graham Sumner** works as a reconstruction artist in both archaeology and military history. He has sent this painting of a Roman Dromedarius, together with a request to members for any information or pictures on camels. (Replies via Central Mailing please.)

I studied as an illustrator at Wrexham School of Art in North Wales, but I have always had an interest in Roman history. I started work with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit in 1981, and since 1983 have worked with Manchester City Council. For the last few years I have worked part-time and spent the rest of my time trying to get my illustration career off the ground.

I realised that whilst the archaeologists I worked with on reconstruction drawings could tell me about the buildings, when it came to figures and costumes I was on my own. To help me with my reconstruction work I became involved with the Ermine Street Guard, the leading society that researches into and reconstructs Roman armour and military equipment. As well as providing a source of willing models for my paintings, membership of the Guard has also introduced me to many of the well-known experts in the field of Roman archaeology.

Over the years I have built up a library of reference works on the Roman Army, and if illustration commissions are thin on the ground I now both write and illustrate articles on this subject, many of which have been published in *Military Illustrated* magazine. This painting of the Roman Dromedarius was for one of these. (The painting has also been used by Verlinden Models USA as reference for a 54mm model kit.)

The subject of the Roman Camel Corps was something I had been interested in for some time. Perhaps this was because of the famous love affair with the desert supposedly attributable to the English; however I had also never seen any previous reconstructions of this particular exotic unit. Nevertheless I was surprised to find that there were some written works on this subject, which provided me with useful background information.

The best source for pictorial information on Dromedarii is at Palmyra



in Syria, but unfortunately the budget didn't allow for a site visit. When the work was completed, many people remarked that the painting served as a reminder that the Roman Empire extended to regions other than Britain. I have still maintained an interest in the Roman camel units and intend to extend my original article for future publication, and an opportunity later presented itself which proved to be extremely beneficial.

A holiday programme on television one evening featured the Bridgewater Camel Company, who actually provide camel rides along the beach at Bridgewater Bay in Somerset. I duly contacted the company and received from them some valuable information on camel

management and veterinary practices. The company also allowed me to bring along a volunteer from the Ermine Street Guard in slightly modified uniform, and to take photographs of him mounted on one of the camels. In spite of a high wind which resulted in a complete inability to communicate with my colleague, the brilliant blue sky and sandy beach stretching off into the distance made the resulting photograph look quite convincing.

*Graham Sumner*

*(The Editor would be interested to hear from any other members who have undertaken unusual commissions, or whose work extends into fields outside archaeology.)*

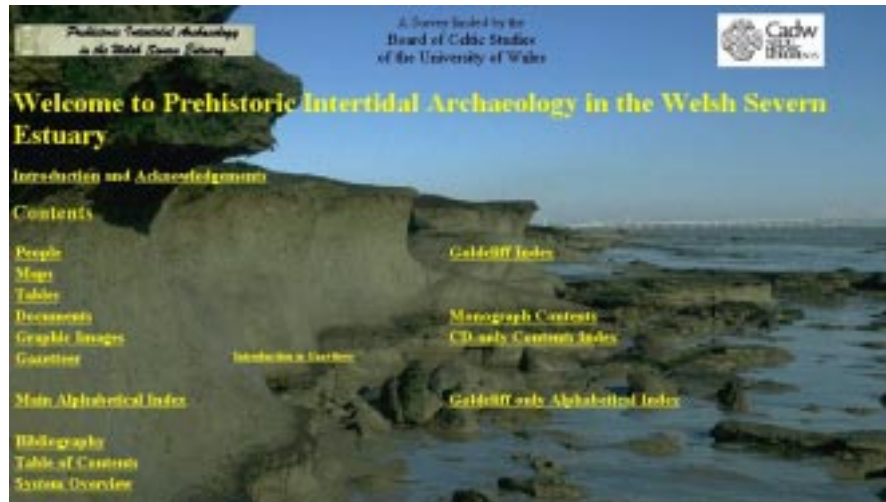


## Tradition versus Innovation: *A Pilot Scheme for Publishing in CD-ROM format*

This is the first of a series of pieces based on presentations to the Annual Conference. *Barbara Taylor* describes her experiences in producing a CD-ROM to accompany the publication of a monograph.

Over the past fifteen years, the Welsh Severn estuary has been increasingly recognised as an area of great archaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential. During 1990-98, several archaeological investigations were carried out on prehistoric intertidal sites exposed by coastal erosion and information thus revealed is due to be published in a forthcoming monograph. (Bell, Caseldine & Neumann, forthcoming; *Prehistoric Archaeology in the Welsh Severn Estuary*. York: CBA.)

Although this publication methodology is, of course, admirable and recognisable in its convention to so many of us, there are also restrictions when you have a digital archive based on such vast amounts of data. One problem encountered with the dataset of maps in hard copy was that it lacked the flexibility of the computer version with regard to scale and the opportunity to link to various databases. We therefore felt that the time was right to explore the newer techniques currently employed in the publishing industry, in particular, utilising CD-ROM format.



The CD's homepage functions like that of a website, or the Contents page of a traditional publication.

The first stage was to design and develop a working prototype, which would later evolve into the published version. The concept behind the CD is that of a 'storyboard' which determines the overall structure, design and layout of the presentation; the organisation of the data into main sections of related information, and the development of hierarchies that link the information together from a home page to the various topics or indices.

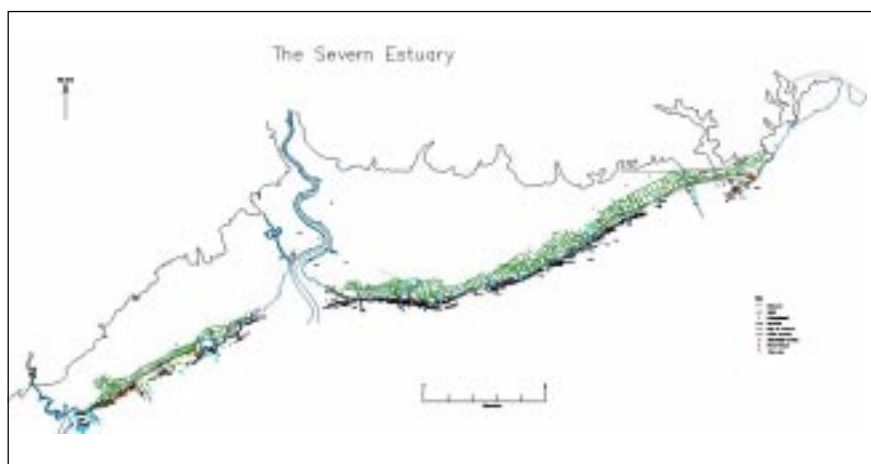
The framework is based on a hierarchical structure of data (similar to a family tree) and there are several ways to access information; a logical sequential route throughout the entire database; shorter pathways through each particular entity; or via loops which link attributes

between and within sections. A thematic approach to navigation systems was decided upon, with the broad aims of simplicity and consistency in title, logo and link button layout to enable users to access information confidently.

After the framework and navigation systems were created, files were created for individual pages and the data was converted into .html files. .html stands for HyperText Markup Language and works differently from the standard WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) format that is used in, for instance, Microsoft Word. In order to retrieve, display and read the files written in this language, you will need to have access to a Web browser.

The core of the CD is the digital basemap, which is the definitive database for the project and the other data sets are related to it. The CD also contains 80 colour photographs which supplement the 34 black and white photographs in the printed report. An additional element of the CD is short profiles of the authors who have contributed to the publication, our view being that it may be helpful to the reader to know the background from which contributors have approached their work. A further section of the CD contains 174 separate entries which provide supporting information to chapters of the printed report. There are c. 80 tables on the CD (in addition to 31 in the printed text). Finally, the CD contains numerical information about bones,

(Continued over)



The base map on the CD can be zoomed in on to provide more detailed plans, or links to other information such as photographs or tables.

wood and illustrations of an additional 60 pieces of wood. You can zoom into all the graphical data at a large scale resolution, which, like all the data, can of course be printed out if required.

After the trials and tribulations of completing the input of the data onto the CD, the main question to be addressed was its publication. Our original intention was that it was made available on request and more or less at cost price. However, it has been now been decided each monograph will be supplied with a copy of the CD in a plastic wallet.

We see this publication strategy as a compromise between tradition and innovation. To go along the former route, would have required greater post excavation resources than we had available, producing at least two volumes. A fully innovative methodology might have restricted access to many of those interested in intertidal archaeology, and so, for this 'pilot' at least, this CD is not an electronic version of the published text. A further phase could include spoken commentaries and video animation explaining the various features and interpretations. Rewriting the data in .htm language renders it easily downloadable onto a Website, once the questions of data protection and integrity have been resolved.

However, the potential for publishing archaeological data in this format is immense. That is not to deny that there are still some shortcomings. I envisage that, amongst these, funding resources and the establishment of conventions as a guide to good practice are major questions to be resolved. Nonetheless, fully comprehensive forms of digital archiving will be invaluable for future reference, disseminating archaeological data to a wider audience, and, with intuitive search facilities, providing valuable research tools. It really is time for archaeologists to embrace whole-heartedly the revolution that's occurred in the publishing industry and to reap the benefits of electronic publishing.

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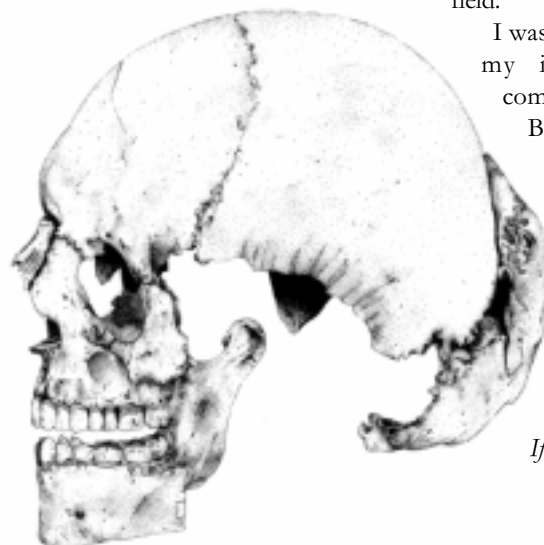
## Bodies of Evidence

I have been drawing human bones at Bradford University's Department of Archaeological Sciences for nearly a year now. Despite having been interested in 'scientific illustration' for many years, it wasn't until I visited the Unit of Art in Medicine (Richard Neave's studio) at Manchester University that I realised I could take my interest further.

I am a full-time Illustration (BA Art & Design) student at Bradford College. This is my third and final year, and as such I can specialise in any area I choose. Over the last year I have been gaining experience by working in the Calvin Wells Lab of Bradford University. There, amongst other things I have been illustrating the skulls of soldiers who died during the Battle of Towton (1461). Many of the crania exhibited wounds caused by several types of weapon including swords, daggers, arrows and battleaxes.

I tend to begin with a measured pencil drawing; this is later worked up in pen on drafting film, possibly adding colour with gouache paint to the rear of the film. I was lucky enough to have two of my Towton illustrations featured on Channel Four's documentary *Secrets of the Dead - Blood Red Roses*. This year I will be continuing my work in illustrating human remains in archaeology, as well as looking at other aspects of scientific illustration, including medical art.

As always with archaeological illustration, there are those who ask, "why



can't you just take a photograph?". My response to this, shared by those archaeologists and osteoarchaeologists I have been lucky enough to work with, is that a photograph, no matter how good, cannot choose to emphasise one area in preference to another, e.g., to show up the relevant peri-mortem damage against the post-mortem. The desired result can often only be achieved by a specialist illustrator working in conjunction with an osteoarchaeologist. Despite this, I was interested to learn that none of those attending this year's AAI&S Conference specialised in the illustration of human remains. It seems that, despite the inadequacies of photography and the desire of osteoarchaeologists to have the work properly illustrated, few illustrators have taken the initiative to break into this field.

I was pleased to learn this week that my illustration had won the competition to design a logo for the British Association of Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology, and I am looking forward to seeing it in use. I hope that between the work of BABAO and specialist illustrators like myself, this discipline may at last begin to take off.

Caroline Needham  
 If anyone has any comments they can  
 contact me at:  
 carolineneedham@yahoo.co.uk

## Late Payments

Since I came to rely on freelance work for my living, I have come across several problems which I didn't have as a wage slave. The one that really concerns me at the moment is the way certain employers think they can blatantly ignore the terms of the contracts they themselves issue, and delay paying freelance specialists way beyond the time payment is due.

Recently I have been doing some work for two of our leading archaeological units; Units which advertise themselves as professional organisations at the cutting edge of archaeology. So why, when they issue contracts which specify payment will be made "within 30 days of receipt of invoice", do I always have to ring up around Day 40 to ask what's become of my pay? A cheque usually appears around Day 50, but never after fewer than two phone calls. (I have tried putting the date when payment is due on the invoice, but that doesn't seem to help.) I have heard from colleagues about finance offices which continually lose invoices, or claim that finance isn't actually anything to do with them.

I would be very grateful to hear from others who have had problems with late payments, as perhaps would other members. Tales of woe, please!

## Subscriptions

Members are reminded that subscriptions are now due for 1999 - 2000.

Current rates remain:

Full Member £30

Licentiate Member £24

Associate Member £17

Concessionary (student, unwaged) £10

Cheques should be made payable to AAI&S and sent to the Treasurer via Central Mailing (note new address: AAI&S, c/o University of Exeter, Dept. of Archaeology, Laver Building, North Park Road, Exeter EX4 4QE).

## Jobs Mailing List

Members who are seeking freelance or full-time employment may still register with the AAI&S Jobs Mailing list. This service is free to members, and we hope to circulate news of work opportunities directly to those interested.

If you wish to be added to the list, please send your details to Central Mailing, stating whether you are interested in full-time, freelance or all vacancies

## DIARY

18 November

### *Neolithic Archaeology in the Intertidal Zone*

Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London.

Details from: Prof. T. Darvill, School of Conservation Sciences, Bournemouth University, Poole, Dorset B12 5BB

20 - 21 November

### *Early Prehistoric Pottery*

Weekend course at Rewley House, Oxford.

Details from: OUDCE, 1, Wellington Square, Oxford, OX1 2JA

Tel: 01865 270 360

20 November

### *Pompeii: Stepping back from the Eruption*

University of Reading

Details from: P. Woodman, Dept. of Continuing Education, University of Reading, London Road, RG1 5AQ

Tel: 0118 931 6654 e-mail:

P.E.Woodman@reading.ac.uk

2 - 4 December

### *Conserving the Painted Past*

English Heritage conference on wall painting conservation.

Details from: Amanda Holgate,

Conference Administrator,

English Heritage, 23 Savile Row,

London W1X 1AB

13 - 14 December

### *Publishing Archaeology on the Web*

Rewley House, Oxford.

Details from: OUDCE, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA

Tel: 01865 270360 e-mail:

enquiries@conted.ox.ac.uk

14 - 17 December

### *TAG 99*

Cardiff University School of History & Archaeology

Details from: TAG 99 committee, HISAR, Cardiff University, PO Box 909,

Cardiff CF13XU

e-mail: tag99@cf.ac.uk

*Apologies for regional bias. Please contact the Editor with news of any future courses/ events/ exhibitions in your area.*

## RECONSTRUCTION ARTIST REQUIRED

The National Trust is opening a new exhibition at the famous Anglo-Saxon site at Sutton Hoo. Graphic reconstructions will play a major part in the exhibition.

We are looking for an **Artist** (or artists) with flair to undertake both landscape and figure work. We will also require an **Illustrator** with a clear analytical style to illustrate such things as craft processes.

Please send CV and examples of your work to:

Chris Hudson  
Panther House,  
38 Mount Pleasant,  
London WC1X 0AP.

## REVIEW

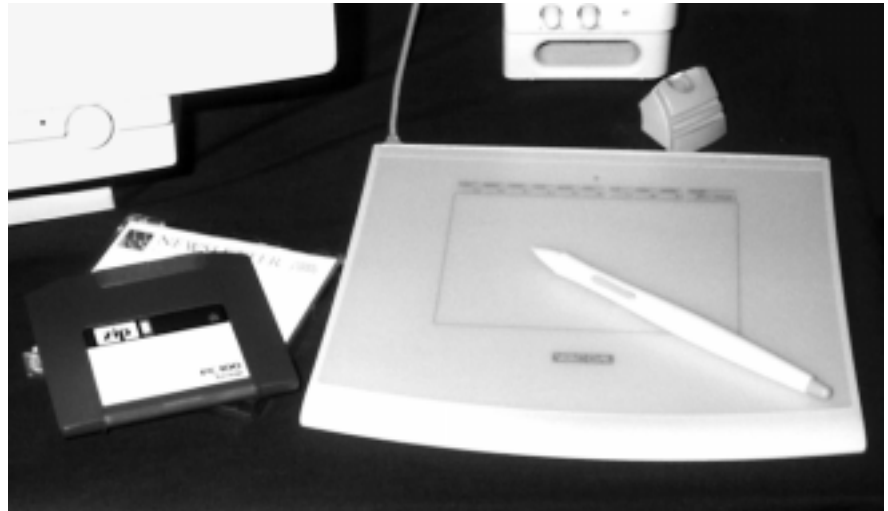
A graphics tablet can be a useful tool for use with drawing, image-editing or layout software. Initially prohibitively expensive, these are now coming within the reach of the freelance or home user.

We look at the new range of tablets from one of the most reputable manufacturers in the field.

When I first began using computer graphics packages, I found their flexibility and accuracy very exciting, but, initially anyway, using a mouse for drawing was both awkward and painful. Hand muscles, trained to move with pen or pencil for too many years, protested about being forced to do unaccustomed things. Faced with a large group of skeletons to draw, I begged the loan of a Wacom tablet. It was soon on my shopping list of essential items.

Unlike earlier tablets, the new Wacom Intuos range features a pen that is no longer tied to the tablet by unwieldy cables. It is, essentially, just a pen. Or a paintbrush, or an eraser, of course. The pen also performs the same pointing and clicking functions as a mouse, but makes line drawing much more natural and intuitive. Drawing freeform paths with the pencil tool in Illustrator is at last a viable option.

Perhaps the greatest advantage over a mouse is the pressure-sensitivity of the



tablet. According to the spec., it recognises 1,024 levels of sensitivity. This allows accurate control of many drawing and painting tools.

Using the tablet does not disable your normal mouse - you can still use that for the more 'practical' functions, and pick up the pen for more sensitive drawing tasks. Optional extras are available in the form of specialised 'airbrush' or 'ballpoint' pens, and a cordless mouse and puck; you can set up the tablet to recognise different tools for different tasks.

On the downside, I found using the button on the pen to right- or double-click is a little awkward at first, until I realised you're supposed to use your thumb. Whilst drawing, the button tends to work itself onto the side of the pen away from your finger/thumb. A more matte, grippable finish on the pen would

be an improvement. And of course, the drawback of having no cable on the pen is that, like all pens left untethered, it will stray. (The unit comes with a dinky little penholder, but how many of you remember to park your pen in a penholder? Be honest.)

The tablet comes in sizes from A6 to A3; if you have limited desk space or budget, the A6/A5 versions are fine for all but the most finicky work. The A6 is about the size of the average mousemat (active area being quite a bit smaller than the whole tablet) and sits quite happily on my cramped worksurface.

LC

System requirements:

Mac: System 7.0

PC: Windows 95/98/NT

Prices: £129 (A6), £230 (A5), £330 (A4),

Manufacturer: Wacom.

(tel: (+49) 2131 12390)

[www.wacom.de](http://www.wacom.de)

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The Editor welcomes contributions from members and non-members on any remotely relevant subject. We can cope with most formats, and welcome contributions on disk, (Zip or standard floppy), CD or by e-mail (to [lesley@stanshawe.demon.co.uk](mailto:lesley@stanshawe.demon.co.uk)). Hard copy is acceptable for shorter articles.

Drawings or graphics of any kind are particularly welcome:

*high quality* clean photocopies, camera-ready artwork or digital format.

Deadline for next issue: **11th February 2000**

Newsletter Editor: **Lesley Collett MAAIS**

Printed by **Uniskill Ltd** of Eynsham, Oxfordshire

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