



Excavations at Gelligaer of the Roman annex and baths c 1908. Pictured is archaeologist John Ward with the Rev T J Jones.  
(© Caerphilly CBC)

CYNGOR ARCHAEOLEG BRYDEINIG  
**CBA Wales/Cymru**  
COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

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

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# Excavation of Bronze Age barrows in Ceredigion

*During late 2010 Dyfed Archaeological Trust excavated two round barrows in southern Ceredigion revealing rare grave goods.*

At Pant y Butler near Cardigan a three-week excavation in September followed on from two-weeks' of work in September 2009. The two Pant y Butler round barrows were first recorded in 2004 as low earthworks in an intensive arable regime. By 2009, the larger of the two had been reduced in height and the smaller one was no longer visible as an earthwork.

Excavation demonstrated that the smaller barrow had probably been a cairn rather than an earth mound. A shallow grave containing a simple cremation lay towards the centre of the former barrow. This grave seems to have destroyed the original burial as pieces of burnt bone and fragments of a Bronze Age urn were scattered in and over the grave's backfill. The larger barrow stood to half a metre in height and was built of turf and layers of stone, with the remains of a stone kerb surrounding it. A very large, almost 3m long, stone-filled pit had been dug through the centre of the mound into the underlying buried soil and geological deposits. When first encountered it was thought that this pit was an antiquary's excavation, but on investigation it was found to contain a rough stone-lining and a cremation burial. Accompanying the cremation was a jet necklace of 61 round beads and one triangular bead. As with the smaller barrow it would appear that this secondary grave had removed the original burial, as a few fragments of burnt bone were scattered in its stone backfill. In both instances it would seem that the original burials were deliberately removed and replaced by later burials.



Photo. The jet necklace from Pant y Butler. The beads are 10mm diameter on average. Photograph: Phil Parkes, Cardiff University.

A substantial round barrow at Fan, near Talsarn, had been ploughed flat in the mid 1990s. As this was potentially an important site - a bronze spearhead and a Pygmy Cup had been found in it in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – it was decided to investigate it to ascertain if anything survived. The ‘ghost’ of the round barrow seemed to be apparent on a 2009 geophysical survey, along with a cluster of pits. The 2010 trial excavation therefore targeted what seemed to be the remains of the barrow and some of the pits. Initially the site did not look promising; there was no trace of the barrow and a very thin, stony topsoil lay directly on shattered bedrock with no obvious archaeological feature apparent.

However, careful cleaning of the bedrock revealed two shallow pits, one stone-lined and containing a cremation with a Pygmy Cup, and the second a simple pit with a collared urn containing a cremation and accompanied by a Pygmy Cup containing a red pigment. Fragments of melted bronze were mixed in with the cremation in the stone-lined pit suggesting bronze objects had been placed on the funerary pyre. Only interim results are available, but it would seem that from the analysis of historical data and information from the excavation that Fan was a complex barrow, perhaps of three phases.



Photo. One of the Pygmy Cups from Fan. The diameter of the cup is approximately 80mm. Photograph: Phil Parkes, Cardiff University.

Cadw grant-aided both projects, and volunteers from the local community provided valuable assistance on the excavations. Phil Parkes of Cardiff University is conserving the artefacts from both sites.

*Ken Murphy, Director, Dyfed Archaeological Trust*

You can read more about this project on DATs website at <http://www.cambria.org.uk/> and see the results of geophysical survey at Fan in the forthcoming *Archaeology in Wales Vol 49*.

# Community Archaeology Bursary Project Given Huge Financial Boost

*The Council for British Archaeology has been awarded a grant of £604,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund's (HLF) Skills for the Future programme towards a new project providing bursary funded training for community archaeologists across the UK.*

Four of the bursaries will be located within the Wales heritage sector and will be expected to run for 12 months each, from April 2011 to March 2012.

The project will run for three years and will deliver 27 (9 per year) funded places across England, Scotland and Wales. These are aimed at providing on-the-job training bursaries for individuals to increase their skills and knowledge of working with communities and volunteers.

## **CBA Director, Dr Mike Heyworth, said:**

*In challenging times this funding will provide a key opportunity for the archaeological profession to develop skills and experience of working with voluntary sector community archaeology groups. The outcome in the coming years will be increased public benefit and an enhanced skills base for the archaeological profession across the UK. The Council for British Archaeology is delighted to have the opportunity to lead this initiative, with the welcome and much appreciated support of the Heritage Lottery Fund.*

For more information see the CBA website:

<http://www.britarch.ac.uk/community/bursaries>

## **CBA Wales/Cymru Website News**

As many members will know, the CBA Wales website is long overdue for an update. The site has been taken down temporarily while we undertake this. Suggestions and appropriate content for the new web pages may be sent to:

[cbawales-web@britarch.ac.uk](mailto:cbawales-web@britarch.ac.uk)

# Gelligaer, A window to the past...

Gelligaer is steeped in history and indeed prehistory. The surrounding landscape reads like a 'who's who' of archaeological features and heritage sites – Bronze Age cairns, Beaker Burials, standing stones, early Medieval enclosures, Medieval Platform houses, a Norman Church, a Welsh motte, a Tudor mansion, traces of industry and a strong agricultural tradition which remains to this day. However, it is Gelligaer's rich Roman heritage that is probably least expected

To an archaeologist's eye the undulations in a field just on the fringe of a south Wales Valleys' village immediately conjure up a picture of the past. However, for most people, making the leap of imagination from a bumpy field to a Roman Fort is a little more difficult. Yet this was the challenge that Gelligaer's local people set themselves when decided that they needed to bring to life the village's forgotten Roman remains.



The interpretation area that is currently being re developed to provide an improved view of the fort

here in the heart of the Valleys, and yet, it is the story which seems to catches people's imaginations the most.

Readers are probably familiar with the Roman invasion of Britain (see Richard Brewer's site guide on-line [www.romangelligaer.org](http://www.romangelligaer.org)), so suffice to say that they reached South Wales circa 60AD. Here they met significant resistance from the local Tribe – The Silures. Indeed it took the might of Rome about 20 years to subdue them.

As part of the imposition of Roman Rule, a series of 'Frontier Forts were built between Brecon and Cardiff. Gelligaer with its strategic views and fresh water supply was a natural fort location. The Army first built a

timber fort, but circa 111AD built a smaller stone fort adjacent to the original site – why they moved the fort is one of the mysteries that Gelligaer still holds. There were at least two phase of occupation at this latter site, and fort seems to have been finally abandoned around the early-mid 4th century.

The site was all but lost to history for 1700 years until in the 1890s/1900s the Cardiff

### PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

- Richard Brewer has updated his guidebook for the Fort (including adjustments to the interpretation of the design of the gate and corner towers) and an accompanying mini guide to the rest of the area has been produced.
- On site interpretation including two panels and a 'window' on to the fort which overlies the 'bumps' with a picture of how it might have looked have been installed.
- Educational materials including work packs, videos, and replica 'finds' and costumes (Roman and Edwardian) have been produced.
- A site based walk leaflet and children's clue trail was developed
- A web site which includes a fly through map (in partnership with University of Wales, Newport), downloadable copies of all materials, a map of local finds, an image library etc.
- Improved landscaping and a new fence line along the roadside edge of the fort (which includes 'Roman' icons) has been installed.
- A Roman event and a walks programme have been held.
- Brown signs have been installed at the entry points to the Village.

Naturalists group undertook a series of excavations, which showed the site to be a 'textbook example' of a Roman frontier fort. Following this period of rediscovery, the Fort once again faded from popular memory...until now that is.

The Gelligaer Roman Fort Project was initiated in 2007 when the local Community 1<sup>st</sup> Partnership pulled together a group of interested parties to see if the Fort could be commemorated in some way. An interpretation plan and various funding bids followed. Nearly three years later, and armed with Rural Development Programme funds from the Welsh Assembly Government as well as Heritage Lottery Fund money, the project entered its implementation phase.

The project is now nearing complete, and has made a number of significant achievements in the last 12 months:

The project has involved an awful lot of time and commitment on behalf of the **Gelligaer Roman Fort Working Group**, but hopefully their efforts will ensure that for many years to come Gelligaer's Roman past is firmly back on the map.

*Ruth Taylor-Davies is a freelance interpreter; and Kim Colebrook is a project manager, both of whom worked to help the community deliver this project.*

*For more information contact 0786 2218066.*

## CBA Wales / Cymru Membership Subscription

Following a review of our financial position, discussions at October's AGM and at a recent committee meeting CBA Wales / Cymru are considering a rise in membership subscription rates. The membership rates have not increased for over a decade and so are well overdue for review. The proposed new rates, to come into effect in April 2012, are as follows: Individual £12 ; Joint £15; Institutional £22.50. The committee will also be reviewing payment methods in line with renewing our website and producing new membership leaflets. It will still be possible to pay subscriptions jointly with a CBA National membership, see back page for details.

Comments on this proposal are welcomed from members. Please contact the Treasurer at:

Kathy Laws, Treasurer  
Afallon, Tanygrisiau,  
Blaenau Ffestiniog,  
Gwynedd LL41 3RH

[Kathy.Laws@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Kathy.Laws@hotmail.co.uk)

## Uplands Archaeology Events 2011

Next year's Uplands Archaeology Forum (at which fieldworkers will give presentations on this year's work) will be held at the Glasdir Centre in Llanrwst on **Friday 13 May 2011**. We hope to combine the meeting with the launch of a publication on Mynydd Hiraethog/ Denbigh Moors. This is based on the results of our surveys there and we hope it will be the first in a series of volumes covering the upland landscapes of Wales.

The day after the Forum, **Saturday 14 May**, there will be a guided walk around the Hiraethog landscape taking in a range of archaeological and historical sites.

Further details and booking arrangements for both Forum and walk will be available nearer the time and will be posted on the Commission's website <http://www.rcahmw.gov.uk/>

Contact: David Leighton RCAHMW [david.leighton@cbhc.gov.uk/](mailto:david.leighton@cbhc.gov.uk/)

## Digital Past 2011

New technologies in heritage, interpretation & outreach

**15th – 16th February 2011**

Faenol Fawr Country House Hotel, Bodelwyddan, North Wales

Conference papers, seminars, and practical training sessions will be combined to cover the latest technical survey and interpretation techniques and their practical application in heritage interpretation, education and conservation. The conference will appeal to all those working in the archaeological, heritage, interpretation and museums sectors. Popular workshop sessions allow 'hands on' training in software applications, GIS, laser scanning and other survey and visualisation techniques from the experts.

Contact: Susan Fielding at [susan.fielding@rcahmw.gov.uk](mailto:susan.fielding@rcahmw.gov.uk)



## Stoking the kiln: Medieval and later ceramic research in Wales

A conference to be held at and in conjunction with the Amgueddfa Cymru/National Museum Wales, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> March 2011. The conference aims to bring together those who are working on or have an interest in medieval and later ceramics in Wales.

For more details please see the National Museum Wales website: [www.museumwales.ac.uk](http://www.museumwales.ac.uk)

or contact Alice Forward [ForwardA1@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:ForwardA1@cardiff.ac.uk)

or Sian Iles [sian.iles@museumwales.ac.uk](mailto:sian.iles@museumwales.ac.uk).



### **CBA Wales/Cymru Spring 2011 Business Meeting and afternoon symposium**

*Saturday 5th March:* at the Plas Y Brenin Mountain Centre,  
Capel Curig. <http://www.pyb.co.uk/>

### **Autumn 2011 AGM and afternoon symposium**

*Saturday 22nd October:* at the Gateway Centre,  
Shrewsbury.

**Croeso I Bawb: Welcome to all  
for more information email**

### Committee News

At the forthcoming 2011 AGM in October the posts of Chairman, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary will all be up for elections. All the current post holders are eligible to stand for another three year term, if they wish to. There will also be at least five committee places to be filled. Two of these are currently vacant; the other three held by members eligible for re-election for another three years.

If anyone would like to stand for any of the offices or just join the committee, nominations need to be with the Secretary by mid September, duly proposed and seconded in writing, and supported by the written agreement of the nominee. Nomination forms can be obtained from the Secretary but are not essential.

### CBA Wales/Cymru officers, 2010-2011

*Chair:* Nigel Nayling, School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter Campus, Ceredigion, SA48 7ED (email: [n.nayling@tsd.ac.uk](mailto:n.nayling@tsd.ac.uk))

*Secretary:* Evan Chapman, Dept. of Archaeology and Numismatics, Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP (029 20573 238) (email: [cbawales@britarch.ac.uk](mailto:cbawales@britarch.ac.uk))

*Treasurer:* Kathy Laws, email: [kathy.laws@hotmail.com](mailto:kathy.laws@hotmail.com)

*Membership Secretary:* Jenny Britnell, Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust, 7a Church Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DL (email: [Jennyb@cpat.org.uk](mailto:Jennyb@cpat.org.uk))

*Editor:* Jemma Bezzant, School of Archaeology, History and Anthropology University of Wales Trinity Saint David, Lampeter Campus, Ceredigion, SA48 7ED (email: [j.bezzant@trinitysaintdavid.ac.uk](mailto:j.bezzant@trinitysaintdavid.ac.uk))

### Committee Members

Neil Phillips, John Latham, Gary Robinson, Wendy Toomey, Andrew Seaman, Richard Hankinson, Stephen Briggs, Jan Bailey, Mike Scott-Archer,

## Mike Anthony (1960-2010)

In 2002 Llangynidr Local History Society discussed with Dr Sian Rees of Cadw the possibility of an archaeological dig on Persondy Field in Llangynidr and Mike Anthony took up directorship of the project.

The Society was deeply indebted to Mike for his leadership, thoroughness and good humour and were happy to invite him to oversee the 2004 season assessing the remains of a 16th century farm house in Cwm Glaisfer. Mike's as yet undiagnosed illness precluded him from further active fieldwork but he was appointed to the newly established post of Conservation Coordinator (Development Officer) for CBA Wales/Cymru in April 2007, with an office in Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum of Wales. This was the first paid post set up in Wales by CBA Wales/Cymru and Mike was selected by interview. He tackled this role with great enthusiasm, despite his health restrictions and he was warmly welcomed at the CBA Committee meeting in Welshpool in June 2007. Unfortunately late in July 2007 Mike was diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease and informed CBA of his condition.

By 2009, Mike's illness meant that he was on unpaid leave and it was agreed that he should take early retirement at the end of the financial year. While greatly physically drained he still was only too glad to get involved in looking at artefacts and assessing them, something he continued to do right up until September 2010 when he looked at possible medieval pot sherds for Llangynidr Local History Society's most recent excavation.

Mike was born in Hengoed on 15th February 1960 and educated at Lewis boys school in Pengam. He left in 1978 after sitting his 'A' levels and went to work for the gas board. In 1983 he became a mature student at Gwent College of H.E. (now University of Wales College Newport - UWCN), where he gained a BA Hons in History and English and met his wife Fay.

In 1996, while working at UWCN, he completed a Masters degree in History, which gave him the opportunity to develop his interest in archaeology. In 1997 he became a part time tutor in History and Archaeology at the college, while undertaking post graduate research, where he remained until 2000. He gained an M.Phil in 2004, with research on the mapping of the chemical composition and distribution of medieval pottery in South East Wales and, this knowledge of pottery proved invaluable while working in the field. He had many interests, including archery and brewing, the history of both he explored in depth. He had been active in researching the archaeology of Llancaiach Fawr and was in the process of researching and writing about Llewellyn Bren (the last lord of Senghenydd). Sadly this was not completed.

He was a lifelong supporter of Neath Rugby Football Club and at his Humanist memorial service on Sept 30th 2010 mourners were invited to wear rugby shirts. Music at the service included Queen, Bryan Adams and Mozart clarinet concerto. He is survived by his wife Fay, mother Dorothy, brother Peter, sister Janet, his sisters and brothers in law Jayne, Zoe, Mark and Andy, his nephew and niece Efan and Carys and his mother in law Sandra.

Mike Scott-Archer

# CBA Membership Benefits

“The government listens to what the Council for British Archaeology says. If members of the public want to shape government policy on archaeology, they should join the Council, You don't have to be a professional to join.”

- a welcome pack outlining the work of the CBA and its network of national / regional groups
- six issues a year of our magazine *British Archaeology*, keeping you informed of all the latest developments in archaeology and including a round-up of archaeological events and fieldwork
- 3 issues a year of our *CBA Members' Newsletter*, keeping you up to date with the latest CBA news and developments
- 3 issues a year of the *CBA Conservation Update*, to keep you in touch with our important work in this area
- an annual booklet featuring all 'Festival of British Archaeology' events
- special discount offers for members including access to CBA events and offers with partner organisations
- access to our information and education service
- special pre-publication offers on CBA books'

**CBA Wales/Cymru** is a national organisation in its own right. Additional benefits include annual meetings and symposiums, a biannual newsletter and the annually-published journal *Archaeology in Wales*.

Contact the CBA Wales/Cymru membership secretary on

[Kathy.laws@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Kathy.laws@hotmail.co.uk)

***Items for inclusion in the next newsletter should be sent to:***

**Dr J Bezant**

**Department of Archaeology, History and Anthropology**

**University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Lampeter**

**SA48 7ED**

**[j.bezant@tsd.ac.uk](mailto:j.bezant@tsd.ac.uk)**