

A flying Scheduled Ancient Monument! Aaron Brute's Bridge Blaenavon, in the process of being returned after conservation.

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

CBA Wales/Cymru

CYNGOR ARCHAEOLEG BRYDEINIG

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

Newsletter 45 SPRING 2013

Introducing the CBA Planning Database

At the Spring meeting in early March 2013, Bev Kerr introduced the new CBA Planning Database.

In its role as an amenity society, the CBA is consulted by local planning authorities in England and Wales of applications for Listed Building Consent which involve an element of demolition. We are given 21 days in which to comment. Managing the large number of applications we receive has over the years become more and more difficult, with a system which was labour intensive and inflexible. A year ago the CBA began to consider alternative options.

Running a database on the web was realised to be the answer. The database can be found at:

<http://www.cbacasework.org/>

The database is administered by the CBA staff in York, is accessible to agents who act on behalf of the CBA, is visible to volunteers who may wish to write comments back to the CBA, and most importantly, it gives the general public visibility of our work and the responses we make.

It is easy to search the database if you want to know if the CBA have been consulted on a particular application, or if you just want to know what's going on in your area.

To carry out a simple search, select 'Wales' and 'Search Casefiles'. You can either type in the address or postcode of the building, use the drop-down menu to select a building type, or type in your local authority name, and click 'Search'. Click on the 'CBA Casefile' to view more details and associated applications. Within an application you can find a description of works, you may find application files we have uploaded, or the CBA response, if there is

Search the Database

- Choose your dataset** England Wales
- Search applications or casefiles** Search Applications Search Casefiles
- Specify timespan** By date-range By year/week From To
- Specify search criteria**

Casefile Info

CBA ID

Address keyword Postcode

Conservation Status Building Type

LPA

Actions

User Login

Username

Password

- [Request new password](#)

We feel the system is fairly intuitive, so feel free to roam the database yourself. It's still in an early stage, but over time the database will grow and develop. Let us know what you think!

Remember, if you feel there is an application for works to a listed building in your area and the CBA don't know about it, or you are concerned about a historic building, why not contact us at the CBA.

Bev Kerr (CBA Conservation and Community Officer for Wales)

bevkerr@archaeologyuk.org

Aaron Brute's Bridge, Blaenavon.

In 2012, Archaeology Wales worked with Torfaen County Borough Council, Cadw and specialist heritage consultants and contractors on a project to restore and consolidate a 200 year old cast iron bridge across the Afon Llwyd in Blaenavon. The bridge is thought to be one of the oldest cast iron bridges in Wales, lies within the Blaenavon Industrial Landscape World Heritage Site, and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Despite this, it had been neglected for many years and was in danger of falling into the river. The aim of the project was to lift the bridge and restore it, consolidate and rebuild the bridge abutments and weir, and return the bridge to use as a public footpath.

The bridge is known locally as Aaron Brute's bridge and is thought to have been built in the 1810s to carry trams laden with coal and ironstone from a small mine adjacent to the river to the ironworks in the middle of the town. The bridge is likely to have been cast at the Blaenavon ironworks, with the mine and tramway run by the Blaenavon Iron and Coal Company. Despite the expense of building this complex structure, the bridge only appears to have been used to carry trams for about 30 years, with the mine level closing by about 1840. Sometime between 1820 and 1840 a huge engineering project was carried out to straighten the river immediately downstream of the bridge and construct a weir below it. There are several theories as to why this was done, most convincing of which is that the weir powered a water-driven mechanism that was used to move trams up the slope from the river to the ironworks. Evidence from a small-scale excavation carried out within the abutment on the Blaenavon side of the river provided tantalising traces of such a mechanism, however there was no scope to fully investigate this and so it must remain unresolved.

The bridge was lifted in May 2012, after considerable efforts to protect it and ensure it did not twist and break. It was transferred to Penybryn Engineering, specialist conservators, and the task of assessing its condition and designing a means of bringing it up to modern standards commenced. Despite its age and the years of neglect, the bridge was in a reasonably robust condition. Unfortunately, all the plates forming the bed of the bridge were beyond repair and had to be replaced, and modern beams were necessary to take the weight of new steel plates. Nevertheless, the bridge was consid-



Bridge prior to restoration



The restored bridge returned

The metalwork was shotblasted to remove all the corrosion and painted, with the original elements painted a dark green and the modern structure black. New hand rails were attached, and these were designed to replicate nineteenth-century fencing that survives along the line of adjacent tramway. The abutments were strengthened to hold the weight of the bridge and the new structural elements, and the weir was rebuilt.

On 7th February 2013 the bridge was placed back on the abutments. It is hoped that the work carried out will allow this important structure to survive for another 200 years, and for it to regain its place as one of the key industrial sites in Blaenavon.

The bridge will be formally opened in May 2013 accompanied by an exhibition about the site and the restoration project to be housed in the nearby

Project Eliseg Update

Project Eliseg completed a third season of excavations at the Pillar of Eliseg, a fragmentary ninth-century AD stone cross, which stands on a mound near Valle Crucis Abbey, Llangollen, in northeast Wales. The Pillar once bore a long Latin inscription saying that the cross had been raised by Concenn, ruler of the kingdom of Powys, who died in AD 854, in memory of his great-grandfather, Eliseg, who had driven Anglo-Saxon invaders out of the area. By the seventeenth century the Pillar was no longer standing, but the damaged inscription was recorded by the famous Welsh antiquary Edward Lhuyd in 1696.

Excavation and survey during 2012 aimed to explore the nature of the mound onto which the cross shaft had been erected. This work revealed the mound to be a large, multi-phased, Early Bronze Age kerbed cairn. The cairn is exceptional for the area, in size, complexity of construction and landscape setting, being located in a valley bottom that provides an important route through the north Wales uplands.



The cairn under excavation. One of the cists is visible in the foreground of the photograph



Undisturbed burial cist prior to excavation



A flint knife and bone pin from the cist

Three burial cists were found within the body of the cairn, one of which contained 6kg of cremated human bone, as well as a flint knife and bone pin. Radiocarbon dating should help to refine the dating and chronological sequence of the cairn and analysis of the cremated bone deposits will establish a more detailed understanding of the population using the monument at this time. The evidence can be compared with what is known from the small number of similar excavated Early Bronze Age monuments in the region, notably those at Brenig, as well as allowing comparison and contrast with contemporary monuments elsewhere in north Wales and further afield.

Project Eliseg is a collaborative project between: Bangor University, The University of Chester and Llangollen Museum.

Contact: Dr Gary Robinson (g.robinson@bangor.ac.uk)

The Archaeological Heritage of

Friday 13 September– Sunday 15 September

A weekend of lectures and guided tours that explore the rich archaeological heritage of Pembrokeshire. For full details of the planned programme visit:

www.archaeologyUK.org

Places are limited, so register early through CBA's secure online shop at:

shop.britarch.ac.uk

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL

Council for British Archaeology

CBA Membership

“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”.

Member benefits include:

- 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.
- three issues a year of our *CBA Members' Newsletter*, keeping you up to date with the latest CBA news and developments.
- three 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

Festival of Archaeology 2013

The Festival of British Archaeology will take place 13-28 July 2013.

The Festival showcases the very best of British archaeology, with special events right across the UK, organised and hosted by museums, heritage organisations, national and countryside parks, universities, local societies, and community archaeologists. Events range from excavation open days, behind-the-scenes tours and workshops, to guided walks, talks and finds identifications, family fun days, and more. Search the online listings for what will be on

Upland Archaeology: Dayschool

May-10-2013 – May-11-2013

This year's Uplands Archaeology dayschool will be held at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, in the Snowdonia National Park on Friday 10 May. The dayschool is entitled 'Archaeology in the Mountains' and has been organised by the Royal Commission, Snowdonia National Park and Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. During the morning session fieldworkers will give presentations on this year's work in the uplands archaeology project, while in the afternoon there will be a series of talks detailing the results of recent work carried out by a number of organisations in the national park.

The day after the Forum, Saturday 11 May, there will be visits to archaeological and historical sites in the area of Llyn Cwmystradllyn and also in Cwm Ciprwrth (kilometre square SH5247).

Advanced booking is essential for both the dayschool and guided walk; places will not be available on the day. Cost for the dayschool is £10 including lunch, refreshments and admission. The guided walk is free but places are limited.

Contact: David Leighton

Making sense of a deep and distant past:

INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS

Cymru / Wales IfA Spring Day-School

Friday 17th May 2013

Owain Glyndŵr Institute, Maengwyn Street, Machynlleth SY20 8EE

Cost: IfA Members / Group members: £15.00

Non IfA Members: £18.00

Price includes tea and coffee on arrival and buffet lunch. Vegetarian food is included in the lunch menu. Anyone with special dietary requirements

Archaeology in Wales: Back Issues

Back issues of Archaeology in Wales are available for sale

Volumes: 30 (1990), 31 (1991), 32 (1994) **£3.00 each**

Volumes: 34 (1994), 36 (1996), 37 (1997) **£5.00 each**

Volumes: 39 (1999), 40 (2000), 41 (2001), 43 (2003), 45 (2004) , 46 (2006), 47 (2007), 48 (2008), 49 (2009) **£8.00 each**

Postage and package £1.00 per volume

For further information contact Kathy Laws

The Friends of the Newport Ship: Events

Talks

Wednesday 22nd May, 12.30pm (Newport Museum and Art Gallery)

'From the Riverbed to the Freeze-Dryer and Beyond: The Conservation of the Newport Ship'

Wednesday 12th June, 12.30pm (Newport Museum and Art Gallery)

'Sharks, Pomegranate Seeds and Possible Basque Origins: Newport Medieval Ship Project Update'

Open Days 2013 at the Ship Conservation Centre

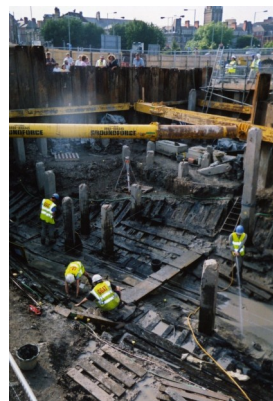
Saturday 27th July, 11am - 4pm.

Medieval Entertainment and the Newport Ship

Minstrels, Nine Mans Morris and Blind Mans Bluff, enjoy medieval entertainment and take part in games and trails. Discover more about the Newport Ship Project and our recent discoveries at this free Open Day

Saturday 7th September, 11-am - 4pm

Medieval Society and the Newport Ship.



The Newport Medieval boat under excavation in 2002

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL

Council for British Archaeology

CBA Wales/Cymru Annual General Meeting and Autumn Symposium 2013

Saturday 19th October 2013

The Royal Oak Hotel

The Cross

Welshpool

Powys SY21 7DG

Business Meeting: 11am

Annual General Meeting: 12.30am

Symposium: 2.00pm - 4.30pm



Newsletter Editor

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

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