

Glaslyn Prehistory Project

COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY

CBA Wales/Cymru

CYNGOR ARCHAEOLEG BRYDEINIG

<http://cbawales.archaeologyuk.org/>

Newsletter 52 Autumn 2016

Medieval Powis sees the light of day

As part of recent conservation work and access improvement works to the East Front at Powis Castle a programme of archaeological work has been undertaken by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust.

Geophysical survey work carried out by ArchaeoPhysica in 2002 indicated the presence of archaeological features relating to earlier phases of the castle surviving beneath a garden adjacent to the 18th Century kitchen wing on the east side of the castle. A possible curtain wall and tower base, along with a possible ditch around the keep, was suggested. Trenches excavated in 2015 went part way to confirming the presence of some of these features, in particular the possible tower base.

A watching brief subsequently carried out on the removal of a 7.5 m section of the retaining wall around the garden and deposits behind it revealed the remains of a substantial masonry wall. Surviving to 1.8 m in height and originally probably 3 m thick this is thought to be the remains of the curtain wall surrounding the bailey of the medieval castle.

It is intended that the results will be published in full in *Archaeology in Wales* 2016.

Kathy Laws, National Trust



Substantial medieval masonry wall revealed at Powis Castle, Welshpool

Glaslyn Prehistory Project, North Wales Excavations 2015

Two excavations were organised in 2015 at the site of a recently discovered shell midden on a former island in the estuary of the River Glaslyn, Gwynedd, North Wales.

The site was found in January 2013 through a programme of fieldwork. In collaboration with Bangor University a fragment of oyster shell, from an auger sample, was radiocarbon dated in the summer of 2013. This gave a late Bronze Age date of 2782 BP. Later the same year the landowner found a small cast lead ornament, possibly of an owl, adjacent to the midden site. The ornament has been identified as a possible votive offering of Roman Age. Interest in the site was intensifying!

Surveying and completing a plan of the site were undertaken in 2014 and preparations made for an excavation the following year.

Glaslyn Prehistory Project is lucky to have the goodwill and interest of the landowner, and the excellent assistance of professional archaeologists and academic prehistorians. What we needed, however, was basic equipment to enable a group of local volunteers to take part in the excavation.

The Council for British Archaeology supported our application for funding and came to our rescue through the Mick Aston Archaeology Fund. As well as basic site tools and equipment, we used the funding to buy a good selection of sample bags, all weather labels and stationery for documentation.

A very large sheet of clear, heavy duty polythene was also purchased to make an emergency cover for the excavation, if needed. It was! With the help of a suspended rope the sheet formed an A- shaped shelter that proved invaluable during three days of heavy rainfall. It was so cosy under the shelter we had to check periodically that the excavators were still awake; I'm sure Mick would have been proud of us!



The results of the excavation have proved really interesting. The first excavation of two weeks at Easter 2015 established a basic plan for organising the site with its restricted access and sloping ground. De-turfing also confirmed the large extent of the midden at over 100m². The second excavation of three weeks in August 2015 saw the opening of two trenches across the midden. The midden was dominated by oyster shells, although many other shell species were identified. Dispersed within the midden we also found some animal bones, fragmented charcoal, and burnt stones. A provisional identification of the bones indicates pig, cattle and sheep. A detailed examination of the charcoal has identified a dominance of Scots pine, with oak and hazel wood.

Further research is continuing, including sieving, sorting and analysing samples. And we feel confident that we have a fascinating prehistoric story to tell about this island site in the Glaslyn Estuary.

During the five weeks of excavation 24 volunteers contributed to the excavating; we thank each one for their help. An additional 25 people visited the site on our Open Day in August, or by arrangement, and we thank them for their interest.

Mick Aston Archaeology Fund

The Mick Aston Archaeology Fund, supported by English Heritage and Cadw, aims to encourage independent, voluntary effort in making original contributions to the study and care of the historic environment.



Who is eligible?

The Mick Aston Archaeology Fund (previously known as Challenge Funding) is open to applicants in England and Wales.

Voluntary groups, societies and individuals are invited to put forward proposals to support new or existing innovative research projects, which will enhance the understanding of local heritage, and thus aid its future care. Applications which encourage the participation of young people are encouraged.

Applicants can ask for up to £1,000.

Details of how to apply for funding for your group can be found on the Council For British Archaeology webpage at:

<http://new.archaeologyuk.org/mick-aston-archaeology-fund>

Glamorgan YAC 2016

Glamorgan YAC have had an exciting year, with a wide range of different sessions running in 2016! We've had some great guest speakers and even some sessions run by our own members (thanks guys!). Our activities have covered a range of topics from Forensics to Historic Cooking through to Coastal Archaeology.

In the first half of the year we had an exciting session looking at the application of archaeological techniques in the field of forensic science and tried our hand at facial reconstruction.

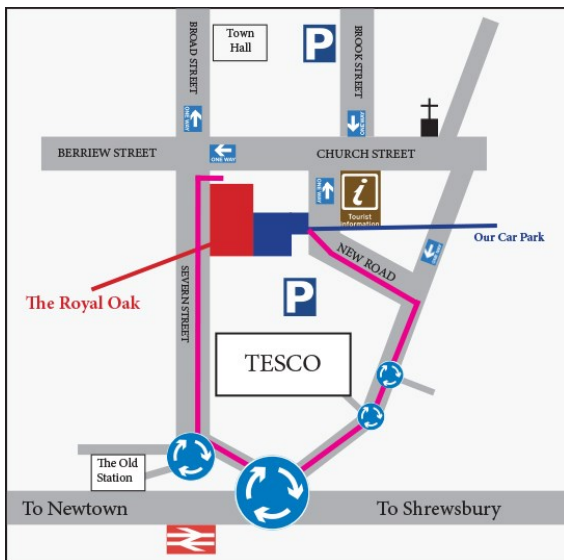
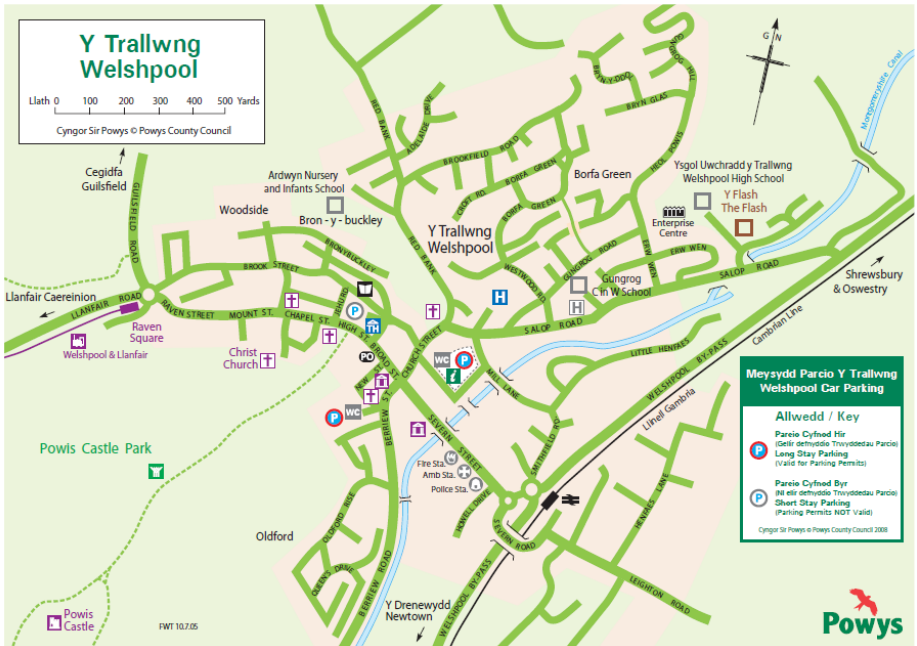
We discussed how forensic anthropologists identify individuals; if you don't have a passport or other identifying objects to work with. How bones alone can still help us determine identity was fascinating!

We discovered that building a biological profile for our individual from bones was easier than we thought...it turns out the pelvis and the skull are really useful!



CBA Wales/Cymru Annual General Meeting and Autumn Symposium 2016

Saturday 15th October 2016



The Royal Oak Hotel,
The Cross, Welshpool,
Powys, SY21 7DG

ARCHAEOLOGY FOR ALL

Council for British Archaeology

CBA Wales/Cymru Annual General Meeting and Autumn Symposium 2016

Saturday 15th October 2016

The Royal Oak Hotel,
The Cross, Welshpool,
Powys, SY21 7DG



Business Meeting: 11.00 am—12.30pm

Symposium: 2.00pm — 4.30pm

Newsletter Editor

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

Dr Gary Robinson

School of History, Welsh History and Archaeology

Bangor University, Bangor, Gwynedd LL57 2DG

g.robinson@bangor.ac.uk