

Editorial

Thanks to all of you who have sent me news and other items for the Newsletter, and apologies to anyone who is wondering whether their submissions have disappeared into the ether. I have deliberately delayed this issue pending news of the various proposals submitted by LSG Members for LAC 2018 (of which more below). And then, less deliberately, I got carried away with my PhD..... sorry about that. Anyway, we hope to see many of you at the LSG Spring meeting which will be at the University of Reading, 23rd/24th March 2018. There is the opportunity for members to give a short presentation to the august assembly - please let Nathalie.Barrett@winchester.ac.uk know if you are interested.

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Bumper harvest predicted for LAC 2018

With the support of the LSG, various Members submitted three separate proposals for the 2018 Landscape Archaeology Conference to be held in Newcastle and Durham on 17th – 20th September 2018: lecture sessions on Transhumance, and Roman military landscapes (inevitably accompanied by a field trip into Northumberland National Park), and a workshop on community archaeology in the landscape. It is with utmost satisfaction that we can report that all three proposals have been accepted, against strong competition (according to the organizers). This is a feather in the cap of the LSG and offers us an opportunity to promote our shared understandings of the value of investigating landscapes. Further details can be obtained from the conference website <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/mccordcentre/lac2018/>

The International Association of Landscape Archaeology (the organisation set up in 2016 in association with the biennial conferences) has finally created its own website: <http://iala-lac.org/>. It includes membership rates, if anyone feels inclined: €40 annual regular membership; €1000 annual corporate membership. The corporate fee is rather beyond the LSG's modest budget at present, but if the IALA matures into a useful and insightful big player, and if we grow into a bigger stronger organisation then I suppose it may well be worth considering in the future. If any of you use ResearchGate, then IALA is listed as a project that you can follow updates from.

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*The LSG's 4th Annual Conference (September 2017):
Productive landscapes: new perspectives from archaeological
survey. Report on the fieldtrip.*

Who knew that there are two Station Roads in Gilwern? Anyway, when Bryn the bus driver had extracted us from the wrong Station Road, ably assisted by Marcus, David and Abby, we visited the Clydach Gorge iron works, an object lesson in the daunting complexity of industrial monuments (even to those who have studied similar sites in other parts of the country, ahem); understanding was considerably aided by the excellent on-site reconstruction drawing as well as the hand-outs provided, which helped to set this spectacularly-sited late 18th-century blast furnace in its landscape context.

The next stop was the World Heritage Site Blaenavon iron works, where we were given a comprehensive guided tour of this remarkably well-preserved complex – awe-inspiring in scale but simultaneously impressive and depressing in its history: impressive by the production of iron rails that almost literally ‘encircle the world’ but depressing in the human misery of generations whose labour was exploited.

Just across the valley the Big Pit provided an interesting lunch stop. The option to go underground was taken only by Krysia (I have had an email from her since so presumably she came up again). The rest of us took the alternative of a walking tour around the industrial archaeology of The Blorenge, which certainly provided the promised spectacular views of the Brecon Beacons, the Usk Valley and Cwm Llanwenarth, especially given the brilliant afternoon sunshine. The tramroads made for good walking, with a tunnelled section even allowing several enterprising members of the group to go for a crawl. The forge at Garn Ddyrys and its attendant structures and landscape features provided several puzzles, which the combined mental ability and accumulated experience of the LSG totally failed to solve.

Heartfelt thanks to the Triple-A Team – Abby Hunt (LSG), Alice Thorne (Brecon Beacons National Park) and Amelia Pannett (CADW) – for a thoroughly enjoyable field trip.

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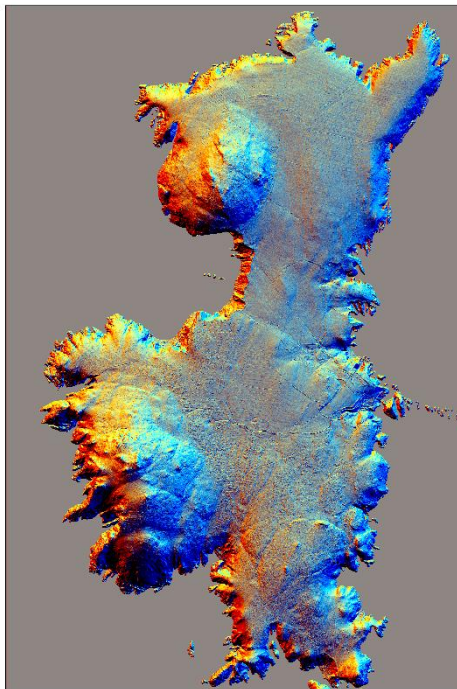
Hot on the heels of the LSG visit to Blaenavon, I found myself in Victoria, Australia, almost by chance briefly visiting a small blast furnace site in scrub forest at Lal Lal. According to the guidebooks, the iron ore deposits were first recognised in 1857, but not worked until 1875, the surviving furnace, the third to be built on the site, was constructed in 1880 and operated until 1884, when it closed in the face of the collapse of iron prices. It is apparently the only blast furnace of its type surviving in the southern hemisphere. This is no Blaenavon, but Lal Lal has its place in illustrating a common history, which from the late 18th century was increasingly driven by global forces. It is a piece of alien technology introduced from Britain and as illustrative of the character of late 19th-century furnaces as if it had been built in Scotland or the Lake District. And like other short-lived production sites it provides a relatively well-preserved glimpse of a furnace that might well have been swept away on a more successful works, where rapid reworking and restructuring driven by industrial development has often destroyed all but the most recent phases. At Lal Lal the remains of an ironstone pit are visible beneath the trees upslope from the furnace, with a short tramroad leading down the slope, evidence of what was probably a water-management system in what is now a very dry environment, the footings of a blacksmith's shop and other structures with engine bases. While much of the stone cladding has been robbed from the furnace, the lining is intact, illustrating the separation between the lining and the main structure. The furnace bricks are stamped Harris & Pearson, Stourbridge, which in the kaleidoscope of Australian place-names I initially assumed to be reasonably close at hand. Apparently not, the only Australian Stourbridge on Google Earth is a street in Brisbane, while a quick Google search lands closer to home. Peter Harris and George Pearson went into partnership in 1852 and, though the company was bought in 1968 by Dyson Group Plc, it continued to trade independently until about 1980. Its Grade II listed offices built in 1888 in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, have been restored by the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust. This unlikely bit of fieldwork against a background of wallabies and kangaroos is as relevant to our understanding of our own history as it is to the rape of more distant landscapes by Western Europeans.

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CHERISH: an exciting joint nation approach to heritage and climate change

CHERISH (Climate, Heritage and Environments of Reefs, Islands and Headlands) is an exciting new 5 year EU-funded project that will bring together two nations to increase knowledge and understanding of the impacts (past, present and near-future) of climate change, storminess and extreme weather events on the coastal cultural heritage of Wales and Ireland. The primary aim of the project is to address knowledge and data gaps along both coastlines by using a whole host of innovative and traditional techniques linking both land and sea.

These knowledge gaps will be addressed by taking a unique multi-disciplinary approach to collecting data in these dynamic and complex landscapes. The coming together of four specialist organisations from both nations encapsulates this approach: The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, Aberystwyth University, Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, The Discovery Programme and The Geological Survey of Ireland. Each partner brings invaluable expertise in a vast variety of disciplines from technical survey to palaeoenvironmental research, and each organisation has plenty to learn from the other.



In terms of our progress so far we - are just coming to the end of our first year (and it has flown by!). We now have all of our team in place and are ready to begin trudging, surveying, sailing and flying along our respective coastlines. Major field interventions will commence next year but this is not to say that we haven't already made a start on the exciting stuff! The biggest success so far on the Welsh side is the acquisition of our highly accurate 0.25m LiDAR of the six Welsh islands which previously had no metrically accurate data (Bardsey, Grassholm, Puffin, Ramsey, Skerries and The Tudwall's). Not only does this data offer us a new and unparalleled view of the islands and its archaeology but also provides us with fixed baseline data from which we can track any changes in the coastlines over the

next 5 years.

From both the LiDAR data and aerial photographs, we have started to create detailed maps of the archaeology with numerous new discoveries recorded. Work carried out on Ramsey Island just off the west coast of Pembrokeshire has thrown

0.25M Multiple-Hillshade lidar model of Ramsey Island, flown by Bluesky International LTD ©CHERISH

up numerous new features, many of which are too subtle to pick up through ground observation (as we discovered!). The key discovery has been confirmation of a likely promontory fort that occupies a distinct promontory at the northern tip of the island. This, coupled with the countless prehistoric field boundaries and cairns scattered across the island, has begun to unlock a chapter of the island's past that was previously underestimated...



3D Model of UNESCO World Heritage Site Skellig Michael
created from laser scan data

Over in Ireland the team have been carrying out surveys of the land and sea using laser scanning technology. One of their key sites is the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Skellig Michael, 12km off the south west coast of Ireland. Here they have carried out a comprehensive detailed laser scan survey of the exposed monastery, which will be used to assess the integrity and stability of the iconic structures. This work forms part of long term monitoring of the site for the Office of Public Works. In a similar fashion to the LiDAR in Wales, we will be able to use this data to track any changes in the monument as a result of storminess over

the course of the project, as well as being able to archive a detailed dataset that will be used for years to come.

That is just a brief introduction of the project and some of the work that we have been doing. We are really looking forward to seeing what can be achieved in the coming years and hope you will follow our work throughout! Please take a look at our website <http://www.cherishproject.eu/en/> , like our Facebook (CHERISH Project) and Twitter (@CHERISHProj) pages to stay up to date!

Dan Hunt – CHERISH Investigator, RCAHMW

[Please note that Dan Hunt and Louise Barker will be giving a short paper on the project at the forthcoming Spring Meeting.]

News and forthcoming events

Survey news from Historic England

Escaping through the back doors of various offices while no one else is looking, Historic England Investigators still contrive to do some fieldwork. In the last quarter we published Research Reports on, amongst others: Belsay Castle, Northumberland; Redlingfield Priory, Suffolk; Marble Hill House, Twickenham; and Snodhill Castle, Herefordshire. All can be found at <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/research-results/research-reports/> The East of England Office is currently surveying a Hospitallers' moated site at Shingay-cum-Wendy, Cambridgeshire.

We also published an updated version of the Guidance Document *Understanding the Archaeology of Landscapes: a guide to good recording practice* as an electronic document at the end of last year. This is downloadable at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images.../understanding-archaeology-of-landscapes/>

Mark Bowden & Magnus Alexander

23rd - 24th March 2018: LSG Spring Meeting (Reading)

We hope to see many of you at the Spring Meeting which will be held at the University of Reading, followed by a fieldtrip to the sites of the Silchester Environs Project. There is the opportunity for members to give a short presentation after the AGM on the Friday - please let Nathalie.Barrett@winchester.ac.uk know if you are interested.

19th February 2018: The Forests of Essex (London)

This day conference at Gilwell Park, held in memory of Oliver Rackham FSA, will explore the cultural and natural heritage of the forests of Essex, and issues of the understanding, management and future of trees, woods and forests in the county. The conference will include a keynote session by Tom Williamson and contributions from Charles Watkins FSA.

25th – 27th April 2018 ClfA conference, Brighton

As part of the annual ClfA conference, LSG Members Lawrence.shaw@newforestnpa.gov.uk and paul.belford@cpat.org.uk are organizing a session on 'Innovative approaches to managing cultural heritage in challenging landscapes'. Though protected landscapes may have a clearly defined boundary and nominated protection bodies, the number of different landowners and stakeholders can be challenging. Another challenge is that certain archaeological features within a landscape, such as linear earthworks, may enjoy different levels of protection, depending on the status of the landscape through which they pass. This session will consider the challenges seen when managing the cultural heritage in these landscapes as well as these linear monuments and the issues that surround multi-authority multiagency and multi-owners. Papers will seek to show how organisations have delivered innovative and/or synergic workflows to successfully achieve good practice and sustainable protection. A linked excursion to the South Downs National Park will look at some of the challenges and successes discussed during this session. More details can be found here <http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfA2018%20-%20Provisional%20Programme%20v1.0.pdf>

28th April 2018: Ancient to Modern: the Changing Landscape of Sussex.

On the back of the ClfA conference detailed above, the Sussex Archaeological Society is hosting a conference in Lewes covering a very wide range of topics. According to the website, it's been fully booked since autumn 2017, but additional places may become available. Further details here: <https://sussexpast.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/landscape-leaflet-final.pdf>

2nd – 5th July 2018: International Medieval Congress 2018 (Leeds)

The four-day programme of the 25th annual International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds is set to be the biggest ever, combining sessions and round tables with an exciting range of events, excursions, workshops, and exhibitions. There is a session on castle landscapes and probably a number of other landscape sessions. You can browse the fully searchable online programme at www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2018.html

18th – 20th May and 7th – 9th September: Masterclasses in field survey

Following a successful trial in 2017, LSG Member Stewart Ainsworth will be leading two 2-day courses in interpreting earthworks, aimed at the general public and based around the Roman fort of *Epiacum* (Whitley Castle), near Alston in Northumberland. Further details here: <https://www.epiacumheritage.org/events/>

Interesting fact No. 679 of an occasional series:

Clive King's classic children's story *Stig of the Dump*, published in 1963, relates to the downland landscape around the megalithic tomb known as Kit's Coty, overlooking the River Medway in north Kent, and draws heavily on the ideas presented in Stuart Piggott's 1954 *Neolithic Cultures of the British Isles*. Well, there you go.