

Archaeology @ Southampton

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School of Humanities

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Scanning the Past

The Department of Archaeology has recently acquired a Konica Minolta 3D laser scanner. This device is used for documenting archaeological artefacts and features at extremely high resolution. The scanner sends out a laser beam and records the shape and texture of whatever it hits. This technology is increasingly important in archaeology where collection and analysis of a wide variety of data is vital: for example, we have recently used the scanner to record Roman artefacts, excavated contexts and buildings, rock art in California and prehistoric stone tools.

3D scanning has opened up new avenues for research. Many subtle features on the surface of artefacts are not immediately obvious to the naked eye. Through manipulating the data in a computer, these small facets become more apparent. The programmes we use to examine the scans allow us to ask new questions, of volume, shape and change in material through time. Laser scanning also enables us to produce extremely accurate physical models of artefacts. Archaeologists can therefore work with high precision models of artefacts, thus reducing damage to fragile materials.



Scanning archaeological remains in a cave, Southern California

TAG 2008

In December 2008, Southampton will play host to one of the largest archaeology conferences held in the UK, the Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG). The aim of TAG has always been to provide an accessible forum for debate, within which students of all levels can take part and contribute to the development of the discipline. Traditionally this has led to the coverage of a wide variety of topics: from discussion of the materialisation of social identity to what can be learnt from the excavation of a transit van. This tradition of breadth and inclusiveness is one that Southampton is happily continuing, with an organisational committee composed of staff and student representatives. This serves to ensure that a wide range of concerns and interests will be reflected in the conference themes, whilst also giving a distinctive 'Southampton' stamp to TAG 2008.



The brand new Archaeology building, setting for sessions for TAG 2008.

For those enrolling in October 2008, the build-up to TAG will provide an exciting atmosphere within which to begin their research and make their voices heard, whether through helping to organise the event or by presenting a paper.

Fraser Sturt

New Ceramicist at Southampton

The department is happy to welcome a new researcher to its staff. Sandy Budden trained as a professional studio potter at Winchester School of Art and Southampton Art School in the early 1970s. Having completed her training she chose to set up in business in the Orkney Islands. Here she ran two successful studio pottery workshops producing a wide range of domestic items for sale across Scotland and to international markets. In the early 1990s Sandy turned her attention to producing replicas and reconstructions of Scottish prehistoric pottery for a wide range of craft shops and museums across Scotland. In 1999, Sandy decided to return to full-time education and combine her practical experience of potting with a degree in archaeology, with the particular intention of being able to explore the way in which potters may have passed on potting skills and the social role that pottery would have played in prehistoric society. Having completed a

Masters Degree and PhD Sandy is now continuing to work within the department of archaeology at the University of Southampton as a Leverhulme Early Career Research Fellow. She is currently engaged in using large Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age assemblages in Austria and Southern Hungary to consider the relationship of learning strategies to processes of cultural transition in the Hallstatt period. Sandy brings her professional skills to the teaching of pottery analysis at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, and has already set up a flourishing departmental seminar series on ceramics.



Leverhulme Early Career Fellow Sandy Budden, potter and archaeological ceramicist.



Representatives of institutions involved in setting up the Centre at the first consortium meeting in Alexandria on the 7th of November 2007, including Dr Emad Khalil (back row, left); Prof. Matthew Johnson, Head of Archaeology at Southampton (front, second from left) and Dr Lucy Blue, Centre for Maritime Archaeology at Southampton (front row, fourth from right).

The Alexandria Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage

Southampton has a long history of involvement with archaeological projects in Egypt. Most recently, the Mareotis Research Project, working in the area of Lake Mareotis near Alexandria, has highlighted the fact that education and training in maritime archaeology and underwater cultural heritage are not available in any academic institution in Egypt, nor in any other Arab country. To address this situation, Dr Lucy Blue and Southampton graduate Dr Emad Khalil applied in December 2006 to the Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies (TEMPUS), managed by the European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture, for two years' money to set up a specialised centre at Alexandria University in Egypt.

In July 2007 a grant of €245,850 was awarded for the establishment of the Alexandria Centre for Maritime Archaeology and Underwater Cultural Heritage at the Faculty of Arts, Alexandria University. The project is a collaboration between six organisations from the EU

and Egypt who will, between them, provide the necessary expertise for the achievement of the project's objectives. In addition to Alexandria University, the beneficiary institution, and Southampton University, the grant holder, the consortium includes the Centre d'Études Alexandrines of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, France; the Nautical Archaeology Society; the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport; and the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities. This centre will provide education and training at different levels in maritime archaeology and underwater cultural heritage for students from varied backgrounds, and will also offer a new postgraduate Diploma and Masters programmes, in accordance with EU standards. Southampton is delighted to have been able to support the growth of maritime archaeology in Egypt, and looks forward to exciting results from the new Centre.

Emad Khalil (Tempus Project Co-ordinator)

New MA in Social Archaeology

Southampton is celebrating the first year of an entirely new MA programme, in Social Archaeology. Instead of emphasising material culture per se, this degree aims to highlight the people behind the objects – how artefacts were made and used; how they were regarded and perceived; the social meaning of past and present material worlds including landscapes, built environments and objects of all types. The broad scope of the programme makes it suitable for students with specialist interests in a wide range of periods, regions and methodologies. Option units available include Art and Representation; the Archaeology of Technology; Buildings and Society; Gender and Archaeology; Material Culture; Cultural Interaction; the Politics of the Past; and Social and Spatial Landscapes.

Archaeology Masters programmes available at Southampton:

- MA Ceramic and Lithic Analysis for Archaeologists
- MA Social Archaeology
- MA Osteoarchaeology
- MA Palaeolithic Archaeology and Human Origins
- MA/MSc Maritime Archaeology
- MSc Maritime Conservation
- MSc Archaeological Computing (Spatial Technologies)
- MSc Archaeological Computing (Virtual Pasts)
- Research-based MPhil.



November 2007: Taiwanese archaeologist Maa-ling Chen and a local Pawanese elder show Southampton archaeologists Graeme Earl and Yvonne Marshall around a proto-historic Pawan slate-house village site, in southern Taiwan. The standing stone indicates the high status of this house.

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