

Archaeology @ Southampton

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School of Humanities

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New book from Head of Archaeology

August 2006 saw the publication of a landmark study of the English landscape, *Ideas of Landscape*, by Matthew Johnson, Head of Archaeology. Matthew focuses on the so-called 'English landscape tradition' and discusses why it is so distinctive. He identifies the origins of this tradition in English Romanticism, through the influence of W.G. Hoskins and others, and argues that the strengths and weaknesses of landscape archaeology



can be traced back to the underlying discontents of the Romantic movement.

This follows on from Matthew's 1999 agenda-setting book *Archaeological Theory*. Now a standard text

for all archaeology students, it has already been published in Spanish and is currently being translated into Chinese and Serbian.

Matthew teaches the first year Landscapes and Seascapes unit, and Archaeological Theory at second year.

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New lecturer in Human Origins



Dr. William Davies (standing) with Dr. John McNabb at the opening of the John Wymer Palaeolithic Laboratory

Archaeology has strengthened its long-standing position as a world-leader in the field of human origins through the appointment of new lecturer, Dr. William Davies. This signals a return to Southampton's original specialism in the archaeological side of the field, with a concentration on material culture and dating as a way to reconstruct hominin societies in the Palaeolithic.

William's current research focusses on two projects to obtain new radiocarbon dates for the earliest manifestations of *Homo sapiens* in Europe:

"We are not dealing with archetypal "cave men", but with complex hunter-gatherers. Many of the things that we think make us what we are today, such as art, music (and by association, complex spoken language), personal adornment (beads, pendants, bracelets and headgear), complex burial rituals, ceramic technology and woven clothing, come into the European record between 45 and 30 thousand years ago."

Together with John McNabb, William is responsible for the Centre for the Archaeology of Human Origins, which now boasts a specially-refurbished Laboratory, the John Wymer Palaeolithic Laboratory. William teaches units in chipped stone tools and hunter-gatherer strategies for survival at undergraduate level, as well as contributing to the Human Origins M.A. course. He is currently co-writing a book on the origins and spread of *Homo sapiens*.

Maritime Landscapes, Shipwrecks and Museums

Two things little known about the Baltic are that it is surprisingly warm in summer and that it is a highly preservative environment for historic shipwrecks. In August 2006 nine students, including five first years, found themselves diving on wrecks hundreds of years old that are still largely intact. This was as part of the ongoing 'Krogen project' run with our colleagues at the University College of South Stockholm in collaboration with the Swedish National

Maritime Museum and the local Kommun of Nynäshamn. Two of the wrecks are popular dive sites and the underwater surveys carried out by Southampton students are designed to monitor the impact of recreational diving and to quantify change and degradation over time. The third wreck, dating from the late 17th century, has long been a mystery and the team's work will help identify it.

As well as the ships themselves, the project also looks at the maritime landscapes in which they sailed. With this in mind the team visited the astonishing Bronze Age rock art at Himmelstalund and the world famous Vasa museum in Stockholm. Professor Carl Olof Cederlund and Dr Fred Hocker gave seminars and tours that culminated in going on board Vasa itself, a privilege normally reserved for royalty and Prime Ministers! Thanks to them and all those who hosted such a successful season.



Southampton students on fieldwork at Krogen

Jon Adams

Focus on New Archaeology Building

Coldplay drummer opens new Archaeology Building



The atrium with the Gary Breeze Megalith

On October 10th 2006 Will Champion, drummer of superstar band Coldplay and son of Archaeology Professor Tim Champion, officially opened the new Crawford building. Designed to provide state of the art teaching and research facilities, this purpose built Archaeology building is a proud statement of the importance of the discipline to the University of Southampton, and of the University's commitment to the development of the subject.

This new building is a breath-taking design of brick, concrete and zinc. Incorporating the existing Crawford Building, it features a three storey atrium as the link between old and new. This area is dominated by the glass-paneled wall running the entire height. Another stunning feature is the 4m high flint panel which

overlooks the entrance to the Avenue Campus, recalling the local vernacular tradition of flint built houses. The flint bricks were knapped by John MacNabb and Fraser Sturt, both lecturers in the department.

The opening was a huge success, uniting past and present members of the University. In front of more than 100 people, Will spoke of his childhood holidays which always seemed to revolve around visits to an archaeological site or two. A seminar room has been named in honour of his late mother, Sara Champion, who also worked as an archaeology lecturer at Southampton. He commented: "The building seems to encapsulate everything that my mother loved: art, archaeology and technology".

State of the art lab facilities

The new Crawford building has been designed to house Archaeology's staff members, and to incorporate teaching laboratories, seminar and research rooms. Pride of place is the Nick Bradford Undergraduate Laboratory which provides spacious teaching space for up to 40 students at once. Also in the new building is the Digital Archaeology Laboratory, equipped with a high-tech 3D projection system for visualising and analysing archaeological landscapes and buildings.

The existing facilities in the old part of the building have been completely refurbished and now form a suite of specially designed laboratories for research and more specialised teaching. These include dedicated fish, animal bone and human skeleton laboratories, an osteology library, petrological laboratories, a stone comparative collection, and a new ceramics and lithics preparation facility. The John Wymer Palaeolithic Laboratory provides a base for the Centre for Human Origins and houses an extensive comparative collection for lithic technology, casts of hominin skulls and a specialist Human Origins library.



The Digital Archaeology Laboratory

Four Artists Add Their Own Touch to the Building's Interior

Given the emphasis on art and representation within the department, it is fitting that a major feature of the new Crawford building is a series of archaeologically inspired artworks. Pride of place is the 2.5m high sandstone megalith in the building's glass atrium by the British artist Gary Breeze. It is carved from Kinder millstone grit with the text HOC PRO SPIRITU LEVANDO STATUI – I set this up to lighten the spirit. In addition, Gary produced a memorial to former staff member Nick Bradford, commissioned from funds raised by staff and former students of Southampton.

Two large canvases by the artist Brian Graham are also on display. Brian's paintings are inspired by archaeology and reproduce the sense of a place in prehistory through the build up of multiple layers of paint. The idea of landscape is similarly key to the mixed media work 'Then and there' by Andrew Campbell, inspired by the way somewhere familiar suddenly appears new and unfamiliar.

The fourth artist on display is the Scottish artist George M. McGavin entitled 'Changing times' which was donated by his son, John, a lecturer in English.



Hengistbury Head 2005 by Brian Graham