

Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust



Newsletter
Autumn 2013



Welcome to the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust newsletter for autumn 2013!

The Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust (CPAT) helps to conserve, understand and interpret archaeology and heritage in Wales and beyond. We do this by maintaining the regional Historic Environment Record (HER), advising planners, landowners and farmers, and providing archaeological services to Welsh government, local authorities and developers. We are one of four Welsh Archaeological Trust – see the map on the centre pages for more information.

News

Our new Director – Paul Belford – started work in June 2013, after the retirement of Bill Britnell. Paul's archaeological career has covered a range of places and periods, from palaeolithic Australia to twentieth century heritage in Bermuda – and also including many years in charge of archaeology at Ironbridge. Perhaps not surprisingly, his main areas of interest are medieval and post-medieval archaeology, particularly the iron and steel industries, and he is passionate about public archaeology.



Paul Belford, the new director of CPAT



Text by Paul Belford, Jeff Spencer and Sophie Watson; design by Paul Belford and Sophie Watson. Images are copyright © the Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust unless otherwise stated.

● Conservation work continues at our hillfort at Beacon Ring, under a management agreement with Cadw. For the moment we are concentrating on clearing gorse and trees from the ramparts, and trying to understand more about the monument. Volunteers are very welcome: we have already worked with local schools, the Welsh Probation Trust, and a firm of accountants; there will be opportunities through the year to come and work with us, so please check the website for details.

Beacon Ring hillfort from the air (top right) and a recent reconstruction (in cake) in honour of our former director Bill Britnell, who retired earlier this year.



We are very excited to be hosting a Community Archaeology Training Placement for a year from September 2013. This Council for British Archaeology (CBA) bursary scheme gives us the opportunity to extend our community archaeology work into exciting new areas. The focus of the job is 'youth engagement', so expect to see our bursary holder out and about in the coming months!

The Historic Environment Records of all four Welsh Archaeological Trusts are online at Archwilio. Archwilio is an easy way to discover the archaeology of Wales through the records of over 100,000 archaeological sites.



There is now an Archwilio 'app' for mobile phones, again developed jointly by the four Trusts, which means you can carry all of the information about Welsh heritage in your pocket!

● Hen Caerwys

The joint CPAT/Cadw project at Hen Caerwys, is now in its third year. This summer the team were joined by local volunteers and students from the University of Chester to continue investigation of this enigmatic site. First discovered in the 1960s, Hen Caerwys is a 'deserted medieval village' – although perhaps it is more accurate to say that it is a multi-period settlement and associated landscape. Finds so far have included pottery, metalworking debris and bone. This year's excavations investigated one of the house platforms, and also examined a stone-walled enclosure to reveal how it was constructed.



● Festival of Archaeology

For the second year running, CPAT was at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre near Rhayader for the Festival of Archaeology. Visitors had the chance to make a medieval pot and a helmet – in keeping of course with early-medieval re-enactment group Cwmwd Iâl, who also set up camp for the weekend to show visitors what life would have been like for an army on the move in the days of the Mabinogion. Cookery and crafts were on display, as well as a demonstration of battle skills by the Cwmwd Iâl warriors.



● Nantclwyd

Earlier this year enthusiastic volunteers and local school groups joined CPAT staff excavating a mysterious mound in the Lord's Garden at Nantclwyd House. The house, which is more than 500 years old, is Listed Grade I, and the gardens are designated Grade II. Our work was investigating several theories which have been put forward to explain the mound. It could have been associated with the Civil War siege, perhaps forming an artillery position overlooking Ruthin castle. Alternatively it could be a garden viewing platform. In fact the mound turned out to be more recent, and constructed of building rubble from Nantclwyd House.

Portable Antiquities

CPAT has a good relationship with several local metal detector users who visit to show us their finds and have a cup of tea. Each item is carefully photographed, weighed and measured before being returned to the finder, the data being added to the Historic Environment Record and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database. We also provide help to report finds of potential Treasure to the Coroner.

See the CPAT or PAS webpages <http://www.cpat.org.uk/services/portable/portable.htm> or <http://finds.org.uk/treasure/advice/summary> for more information.



An unexpected find during the Lord's Garden excavations - a prehistoric flint microlith

Volunteers

Volunteers make an enormous contribution to the work of CPAT, and not just in fieldwork. So far this year we have been assisted by Joe Hampton, who joined us for a month on placement from Chester University; Andrew Evans of Welshpool is processing the results of photographic surveys of historic buildings and Robert Dobson of Newtown is travelling the length and breadth of the Clwyd-Powys region photographing archaeological sites and monuments for addition to the Historic Environment Record. If you want to help, please get in touch!

● Heritage management

This work is all about making sure that historic 'assets' are protected and survive in the modern world. Glastir is a Welsh Government agri-environment scheme, and CPAT's Heritage Management team provide advice to Glastir contract managers and landowners, on how to manage historic features in areas of farmland and woodland. This involves consulting the Historic Environment Record, looking closely at old maps and photographs, and making site visits. This once-grand ruin was the subject of a recent assessment, and is typical of many of the issues involved. Located in the Vale of Grwyney in the Brecon Beacons National Park, this is called 'Hermitage' and may have been a hunting lodge. Although beyond restoration, the complex management issues have been addressed through Glastir with support for vegetation removal and masonry consolidation, prolonging its life.



● Prehistoric settlement and medieval ironworking

Our ongoing project at Borrás Quarry near Wrexham continues to produce some exciting results. There is now a great deal of evidence for what looks like the largest prehistoric settlement to be recorded in the region. Several groups of pits (some of which had been used as hearths and ovens) have contained a large amount of pottery, and post-holes hint at various structures. The site also contains the only evidence in the region for early medieval metalworking. We have found substantial quantities of iron smithing debris, which has been radiocarbon dated to between 610 and 965 AD.





Rossett Mill, Wrexham - a Grade II Listed 16th century mill with surviving driving machinery including pit wheel, wallower, and large spur wheel.*

● Mills and milling

Many mills have very long histories; some survive almost complete, others are now no more than earthworks. This project is revisiting Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments that were first looked at in the 1990s. The purpose of the work is to review the condition of each site to see whether any changes are needed to the way in which they are protected.

● Airfields / First World War

The first phase of the Cadw-funded project on twentieth century military sites came to an end in March with the completion of a pan-Wales study of airfields. CPAT staff recorded the 3 airfields of the RFC and RAF in northeast Wales along with a range of structures in the surrounding landscape. We are now looking more broadly at the heritage of the First World War in our region.

Final reports of all of the projects featured in this newsletter – as well as all our other work – can be found via Archwilio, and summaries are available on the CPAT website.



Melin-y-Wern, Grade II Listed corn mill, Llanbedr Dyffryn Clwyd



Pillbox built to protect RAF Sealand



Crest of 30 Maintenance Unit, RAF

Digwyddiadau 2013

Darlith, Evenjobb, 22ain Awst

Diwrnod Hwyl, Caersws, 7fed Medi

Arddangosfa, Sioe Kington, 14eg Medi

Darlith, Llandrindod, 15fed Medi

Darlith, Holt, 27ain Medi

Events 2013

Talk, Evenjobb, 22nd August

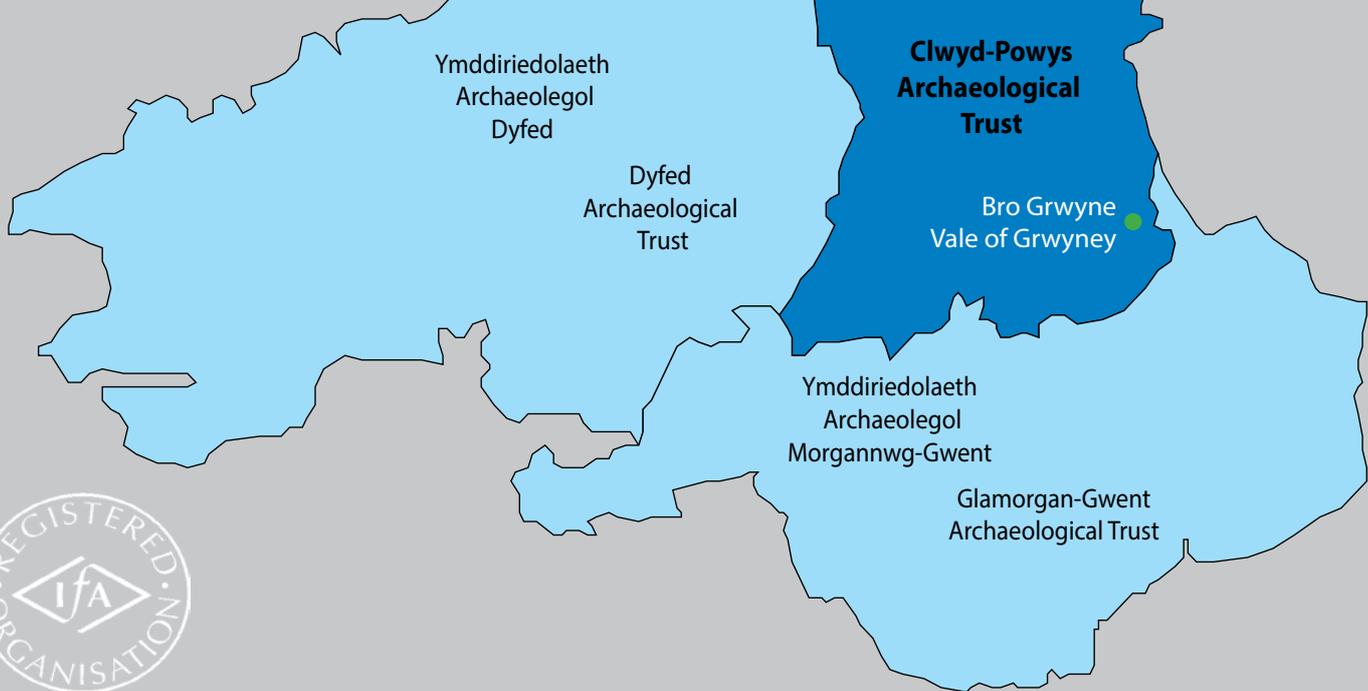
Fun Day, Caersws, 7th September

Exhibition, Kington, 14th September

Talk, Llandrindod Wells, 15th September

Talk, Holt, 27th September





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www.cpat.org.uk/news/newslets/newslets.htm

The Newsletter can be downloaded from
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