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National Archaeology Day, 10th July 2004

Powysland Museum, Welshpool

This year's National Archaeology Day again proved to be a success. Held, as last year, at the Powysland Museum beside the Montgomeryshire Canal in Welshpool, over 100 adults and children came along to enjoy the festivities. As well as perusing the museum's cabinets and displays, visitors could also try their hand at ancient runes and pyrography (the art of decorating wood by burning designs or letters using a special heated metallic tool). There were also Celtic designs for children (or adults!) to colour in, and Saxon costumes to try on.

Right: A Saxon woman returning from market © CPAT 1684-001



CPAT were at hand with the Sites and Monuments Record for members of the public to find out about local archaeological sites and see photographs of the area, many taken from the air. Visitors were also given the opportunity to bring in any objects they may have found in their garden or out walking, for museum and CPAT experts to identify.

Below: An early medieval Welsh soldier - quite a frightening prospect! © CPAT 1684-013



The highlight of the day, and certainly most popular with visitors of all ages, took place in the small picnic area on the other side of the canal bridge from the museum. Here, several members of the re-enactment group *Cwmwd Iâl* were demonstrating Saxon and Welsh medieval life, with cookery demonstrations, authentic replica artefacts and costumes, and rather large and impressive swords! Such was the interest of the visitors, the group spent the whole day answering questions and describing 'life on the road' and early medieval weaponry, and they just didn't have time to demonstrate their fighting skills (just an excuse to run around clashing swords and shouting like small boys if you ask me!).

Hopefully, they will be keen to come along again next year, but maybe only if we promise them they can fight!

So, a success all round! I think this year's National Archaeology Day was an improvement on last year, and hopefully next year will be even better. Look out on our website and in the local press in the early summer next year for information on when and where to join in the fun!

Right: The women weaving and darning. Can you spot which is the Saxon and which is the Welsh woman? One clue is that Saxon women kept their heads covered, with a wimple in this case. So, the bare-headed woman on the right is Welsh © CPAT 1684-010 © CPAT 1684-010



Kids, also remember that if you are aged between 9 and 16, you can join the Young Archaeologists' Club. At the moment there is only one active group within the Clwyd-Powys area, held in Denbighshire, but if this is not convenient for you, you can still join the club and receive the magazine four times a year and enter competitions (including the annual Young Archaeologist of the Year award). To join the Young Archaeologists' Club, contact YAC, Bowes Morrell House, 111 Walmgate, York, YO1 9WA, tel. 01904 671417. For details of the Denbighshire group, contact Fiona Gale on 01824 708262, fiona.gale@denbighshire.gov.uk.



Left: Again, can you tell if this man is Saxon or Welsh? This time look at the legs. This man's legs are covered, indicating he is a Saxon. The Welsh soldier above has bare legs. All of the costumes seen in these photos are based on documentary evidence, including the 'Bayeaux Tapestry'. © CPAT

1684-014

Abi McCullough, August 2004

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