



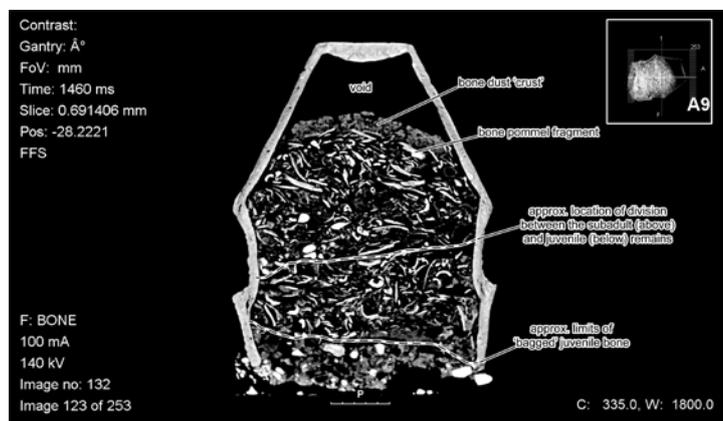
## Ashes to ashes: a remarkable Early Bronze Age cremation burial from Doveridge, Derbyshire

A team from Wessex Archaeology uncovered a hitherto-unknown barrow on the edge of Doveridge, Derbyshire (NGR 41229 33403) during housing construction in 2017–8. Doveridge lies on the south-western limit of the Derbyshire uplands and overlooks the River Dove, which connects the limestone uplands of the ‘White Peak’ to the Trent Valley, both areas being rich in barrows. The monument had been obscured beneath ridge and furrow earthworks and badly affected by consequent plough truncation. Nevertheless, a 22 m diameter ring ditch survived; this was best preserved on its northern and southern sides, where it was 2.3 m wide by 0.5 m deep. The stony, gravelly barrow mound (10 m diameter and up to 0.3 m thick), presumably built from upcast from the ditch excavation, was similarly poorly preserved and difficult to define against the underlying substrate.

The remains of six cremation burials, one urned and five unurned, lay within the confines of the ring ditch; all but one grave occupied the south-eastern quadrant of the area described by the ditch and had clearly been covered by the

barrow mound. Radiocarbon dates on bone samples from the remains of the urned burial – made in an inverted Collared Urn – and three of the unurned burials all fall within a central Early Bronze Age range (1950–1680 cal BC). The urned burial remains, which were block lifted for micro-excavation by the osteoarchaeologist (McKinley), are described here.

The majority of urned burial remains recovered from excavations in the UK have been subject to some degree of horizontal truncation, thereby removing any inorganic protective capping/lid or, in the case of inverted urns, the base of the vessel, and allowing the ingress of the surrounding soil matrix. The latter can have a detrimental effect on the bone in terms of both preservation (e.g. acidic soils assisted by percolating rainwater eroding surface morphology) and increased fragmentation levels (by infiltrating the dehydration fissures developed during cremation). The urned burial remains from Doveridge represent a rare example of an intact vessel and its undisturbed contents, devoid of any



Left: Collared Urn in situ during excavation. Right: Computed Tomography (CT) scan of the urned burial remains showing the distribution of the bone within the two ‘packages’, location of the bone pommel fragments and the void within the inverted base



*Bone pommel recovered during the excavation of the urn*

intrusive materials and presenting an exceptional snapshot of the remains at time of deposition.

Experience has taught that vessels employed as burial containers were rarely – if ever – used to capacity and that there would, therefore, be a void in the up-turned base. Since the vessel needed to be set upright for excavation, potentially causing the contents to shift down into the inevitable void and disrupt the recoverable details of the burial formation process, it was imperative to obtain a preview of the contents and make a visual record in advance of further work. This was facilitated by a CT (computed tomography) scan, the remarkable images from which demonstrate details of the burial formation process, corroborated and enhanced in the subsequent excavation (in a series of 11 quadrant spits of 20 mm depth) and analysis of the contents. Minor damage in excavation, creating a very small hole (approximately 10 mm diameter) in the lower body of the vessel, allowed inert silica gel microbeads to be fed into the ‘void’ to help sustain the contents in position when the vessel was set upright.

The substantial quantity of bone recovered, 1781.9 g, comprises the remains of three individuals; a subadult (13–17 yr; possibly female), a juvenile (7–12 yr) and an infant (1–3 yr). Pyre goods in the form of a small quantity of animal bone – including an elderly dog (found only with the remains of the younger children) and sheep/goat/deer – and fragments of a worked bone pommel (with the subadult) were also present. The distribution of the bone formed two distinct ‘packages’ which could be seen both in the CT scan and in excavation/osteological analysis. The remains of the two younger individuals, recovered from what would have comprised the upper-most package before inversion of the vessel for burial, represent some 51% by weight of the bone (907.5 g) and the teenager in the lower package 49% (874.4 g). In the former instance particularly, this represents a substantial weight of bone for such young individuals. The exceptional circumstances of recovery and excavation meant that the full weight of the 2 mm bone fraction could be recorded (154.1 g infant and juvenile, 130 g subadult), together with the ‘dust’ fraction (<2 mm) which is generally lost within the burial environment. The latter comprised 295.7 g of material (194.5 g infant and juvenile, 100.2 g subadult) and its inclusion increases the overall weight of bone from the burial to 2077.3 g. In the vast

majority of archaeological cases this data is unrecoverable, and its accessibility here helps to illustrate the proportion of the bone originally included in burial deposits which might be lost to the burial environment – in this instance approximately 14% by weight.

The clear division between the two ‘packages’ supports the impression of each being contained within a flexible bag (i.e. textile/skin/leather). Evidence for primary containers of this form associated with Early Bronze Age burials made in both inverted and upright ceramic vessel has been recovered from numerous sites over the last decade or so. The Doveridge example has several unusual features, however. Firstly, the evidence for two bags, each containing remains from a different cremation. Although a review undertaken by McKinley in 1997 found an average of around 5% of Bronze Age burials (from a sample of c. 130 drawn from numerous sites) contained the remains of two or occasionally more individuals, in most of these examples (and others subsequently encountered) the remains were shown to be mixed throughout the deposit suggesting the individuals were not only buried together but probably also cremated together. Such is likely to have been the case with the infant and the juvenile identified here. Clearly separated deposits, obviously derived from cremations undertaken at different times are very rare, although a Middle Bronze Age example from Twyford Down, Hampshire, featured the remains of two adult males. Deposits of this nature imply curation of the remains of at least one of the individuals prior to burial.

The final layer of material within the Doveridge vessel comprised a 20 mm thick, slightly concave, solid deposit of fine silt and bone dust with bone fragments struck within its upper surface. Since the undamaged vessel would ensure no extraneous material could enter, this layer must have existed before the bag of bone was placed in the vessel. It must also already have comprised a solid ‘crust’ otherwise the inversion of the vessel would have led to the fine particle material filtering back down to the lowest level within the vessel. The shape of the upper-most surface of this ‘crust’ does not follow that of the vessel base, indicating the bag of cremated bone was curated sat in/on a different shaped surface/container (with a flat or concave base) long enough for these small particles to amass in the bottom of the bag and form the

solid crust which held on final deposition and inversion. The modelling of the radiocarbon dates acquired from samples of the subadult and juvenile bone suggest a time lapse of up to 10 years between the two cremations, though the gap is more likely to be in the region of three years. A recent radiocarbon study of potentially curated cremated bone (16 samples) suggests remains were retained for a maximum of two generations. Cremated bone is intrinsically divisible, portable and inert, rendering the curation of all or parts of the skeletal remains readily accessible. The desirability of curation raises any number of emotive possibilities such as a reluctance to part with a loved one, or as seems likely to be the case here, the wish to lay those who were close in

life together in death, potentially to enable them to journey together in the afterlife.

#### *Acknowledgements*

Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Lanpro Services Ltd and Bellway Homes. We would also like to thank the staff of the radiography department at Salisbury Hospital, who carried out the CT scan of the urn. The full report on the site will be published in the *Derbyshire Archaeological Journal*.

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## Tributes to Professor John Coles FBA FSA HonFSAScot 1930–2020

John Coles was, quite simply, one of the great prehistorians. His range of interests was immense. Not content with excavating the Somerset Levels with Bryony Coles and sorting out the muddle of the European Bronze Age with Anthony Harding, he also investigated Scandinavian rock art and pioneered experimental approaches to archaeology. John liked to get things done. No effort was wasted. When he taught Cambridge undergraduates in the 1960s, he turned his lectures, with some help from Eric Higgs, into the indispensable *The Archaeology of Early Man*.

John was the embodiment of the Prehistoric Society. He was elected to Council in 1962. A year later he was Assistant Editor then, starting in 1970, Editor for ten years and eleven volumes. Not content with one role he became President in 1978, passing it on to Geoff Wainwright four years later. His interest never wavered. If *PPS* arrived late, he always wanted to know why. And through the Coles Bursary, John and Bryony have supported many students at the start of their careers, encouraging them to explore the world of prehistory. That commitment to see, understand and enjoy never faltered. I remember him leading members on fieldtrips where rain never dampened his enthusiasm and fences were there to be vaulted. Because of John's immense contribution to the Prehistoric Society, we asked close colleagues and friends to provide tributes.

*President Clive Gamble*

It was originally our shared interest in Bronze Age shields that brought us together in the mid-1960s at the start of what would become a lifelong friendship. John was an extraordinarily productive letter-writer, sometimes via email in later years but mainly in the form of small handwritten notes. For my part I usually confine myself to the telephone, but John's handwritten correspondence on a global scale must have been gigantic.

In the course of many years John documented Bronze Age rock carvings in all the main Swedish regions where they are found, particularly in Bohuslän and Uppland, together with a few friends and colleagues from England and Sweden, a certain Bo Gräslund often among them. Never have so many had a single person to thank for such valuable archaeological recording at such minimal cost. John was the master of scientific budgetary economy. Of course, the work was conducted as objectively and simply as possible, with rubbings made on paper. John possessed a remarkable topographic memory and could orient himself with great precision without a map in Uppland and Bohuslän, in the maze of country roads that he had driven along many years earlier. The project resulted in a series of academic monographs and articles, as well as several excellent guidebooks for tourists. John's great primary records of Swedish rock carvings are now archived at the ATA (Antiquarian Topographic Archive, the archive of the Swedish National Heritage Board) in Stockholm.

John was an honest, easy-going, generous and deeply loyal person, far removed from academic intrigues and snobbery. Conversation with him was always a kind of deliverance. He was also full of hilarious stories from his rich archaeological life around the world, told with dispassionate irony and often at his own expense. Despite his refusal to chase academic recognition and his dislike of formal occasions, he was unable to prevent the award of an honorary doctorate from Uppsala University and a prize for excellence from the Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities.

*Bo Gräslund*

I met John Coles in 1974 when I was appointed curator of archaeology at the Somerset County Museum, Taunton. We got on well in a business-like way with the Somerset Levels being the main focus. Our relationship changed

following John's retirement in 1986 and his move to Devon. A very special friendship quickly developed. Archaeology was inevitably at the heart of it. Initially the focus was the Somerset 'lake villages' of Glastonbury and Meare. The sites had been excavated by Arthur Bulleid and Harold St George Gray between 1892 and 1956. In the earlier years, the sites were very high profile and frequently cited in publications but by the 1980s they had rather lapsed into obscurity. John who, with Bryony, had carried out excavations at Meare as part of the Somerset Levels Project recognised that the archives from the early excavations had significant potential to reveal more. The beginning was a volume of the Somerset Levels Papers which brought to print the unpublished excavations at Meare East. With little funding but, crucially, the willing support of several specialists the next outcome was a book: *Industrious and Fairly Civilized: The Glastonbury Lake Village* (1995) which helped to return this internationally important site back to the forefront of archaeology.

This concluded John's primary work in Somerset and he returned to another long-standing interest – Scandinavian rock art. He undertook numerous field trips to record sites in detail to try to better understand their purpose and place in the landscape. I had the great pleasure of accompanying John on 14 or 15 of these occasions. Sometimes the plan was to undertake a regional survey involving visits to a very large number of sites and at other times it was to record a single large and complex site. Our work was occasionally hampered by unexpected snowfalls or the hunting season!

Fieldwork in Sweden was helped considerably by the liberal approach to the right to roam. Private gardens are excluded. On one occasion, when visiting many mainly small sites, there was one that John was particularly keen to see. We eventually located it in a remote corner of the grounds of a very large house. There was no sign of anybody and so, undeterred, John found a small gap in the boundary and in we went. There must have been some form of security system because, shortly afterwards, a man came striding up and asked us what we were doing on his property. John explained what we were doing, and the owner became very interested. He invited us in for coffee and it turned out that he was a member of Sweden's leading folk group Väsen and had also been one of ABBA's backing musicians. The final fieldtrip to Sweden was in 2009 when John was 79 but still scampering over the rocks!

*Stephen Minnitt*

John was introduced to the wetland archaeology of the Somerset moors by Grahame Clark in the mid-1960s, leading to his excavation of several prehistoric wooden trackways before the discovery of the Sweet Track in 1970. The subsequent excavation marked the beginning of the Somerset Levels Project which flourished for the next 15 years with financial backing from the Department of the Environment/English Heritage. That year was also when John met his future wife Bryony Orme, who would soon co-direct the project from Exeter University.



*Some of John's techniques may not have met today's health and safety standards! (Photo: Stephen Minnitt)*

The Somerset Levels Project was pioneering in many respects, such as the close integration of palaeoenvironmental studies, the use of dendrochronology, most memorably on the Sweet Track itself, and the excavation methodology. John overcame numerous obstacles, developing bespoke tools and methods for excavating delicate wooden remains while keeping them wet. Faced with a lack of conservation facilities for wood, he created his own from scratch. An insistence on prompt publication and a determination to capture superb photographs made the 15 volume Somerset Levels Project an iconic series and the very popular book *Sweet Track to Glastonbury* (1988) brought the prehistoric wetland of Somerset to a wide audience.

John and Bryony had a global influence on the development of wetland archaeology through the establishment of the Wetland Archaeology Research Project (WARP) which brought together wetland archaeologists from many countries through a newsletter, a series of very successful annual conferences and eventually the establishment of the *Journal of Wetland Archaeology*. One of the most recent WARP publications was John's archaeological autobiography *Yesterday's Man: An Archaeological Life 1955–1980* (2019), although his contribution to archaeology continued for more than a quarter of a century after 1980.

The success of the Somerset Levels Project inspired English Heritage to create a series of similar schemes in the Fens,

the Humber Wetlands and the North-West wetlands. John was influential in the establishment and running all of these projects as well as playing a bit part in promoting the development of wetland archaeology in Ireland and Scotland.

*Richard Brunning*

Although he never undertook wetland excavations in Scotland, John Coles' impact on wetland archaeology there has been far-reaching. In his Rhind lectures, delivered in Edinburgh in 1994, John set out a list of actions which he considered necessary to activate investigations into the archaeological resource of Scotland's wetlands. Nothing happened and so, four years later at the WARP conference in Dublin in 1998, John again asked loudly and publicly why there was no strategic programme of wetland archaeology in Scotland. Shamed into action, the strangely disparate group of delegates who had presented on Scottish topics at the conference established SWAP, the *Scottish Wetland Archaeology Programme*, home to an informal group whose overall aim, in response to John's prompting, was to initiate such a programme. Twenty-three years on and Scotland is now producing some of the most exciting wetland archaeology in the British Isles, the excavation of numerous crannogs uncovering their anticipated riches, *inter alia* helping to refine chronological resolution and our understanding of living spaces in later prehistory. There is still much to do but we will not forget that John's passion and persistence was instrumental in putting Scotland's wetland archaeology on the international map.

*Anne Crone*

Undoubtedly a Great Man for Carlyle, John was approachable, engaging and friendly, neither aloof nor arrogant, with a hint of fun and mischief. Professionally, he was erudite, innovative, and committed to the highest standards (as befits a former Vice- and Chairman of IFA: 1982–6). I first met John in 1974 when he brought students to Norwich. Although his task was to guide them through the fine museum collections, he went out of his way to seek the curatorial staff to discuss local issues. I was grappling with a hoard of bronzes which John, having rewritten Scottish typology, recognised instantly. Pleased to have been asked for his opinion, he merely encouraged me to publish my research promptly.

Throughout his Presidency of the Society (1978–82), I was Meetings Secretary, a role made much easier because John liked to engage with members, and he seemed to know every prehistorian in Europe. Foreign study tours exposed a sympathetic brotherhood, all too happy to discuss the varied monuments. Sweden was the focus of his sustained fieldwork campaign to record the copious rock art - so much more rewarding for him than 'boring bronzes'. But having taught the Palaeolithic, he was equally interested in the most ancient of images. With Bryony, we squeezed through *chatières*, clambered wire ladders and got caked in mud for the joy of gazing on remote cave paintings. He recalled an earlier visit to Le Portel: exploring the deepest part, he dropped his torch and was plunged into total darkness – not an advisable branch of experimental archaeology. Fortunately, he was recovered disorientated but unscathed by a colleague. In his later years, John wanted to revisit the caves but sadly it never happened.

*Andrew J Lawson*

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## A Late Upper Palaeolithic site in the Red Desert (Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan)

During the summer of 2019, a brief survey was carried out in the Bannu Basin under the patronage of the Taxila Institute for Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. From an archaeological point of view, Bannu is a well-known region of western Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where important settlements of different periods have been discovered and excavated in the last few decades. The main scope of the 2019 research was to check the presence of Palaeolithic sites, which were suggested to be present in the area. During our short visit, one typical Middle Palaeolithic Levallois artefact was discovered *in situ* on the surface of the gravel terraces that extend close to the Neolithic site of Sheri Khan Tarakai.

During the field research, the territory locally called Red Desert was also briefly surveyed. The Red Desert is an important, almost intact and remote archaeological landscape, which has never been systematically surveyed. The area deserves much attention because of its great archaeological potential, and also because we know very

little of the late Pleistocene and early Holocene periods of the Bannu Basin and Pakistan in general.

In the 1980s, Farid Khan had discovered and briefly described a unique site that he called Gul Shah Tup in the Red Desert region. He attributed the knapped stone assemblage collected along the slopes of this small natural mound to the Mesolithic because of the microlithic dimension of the artefacts he found on its surface, and the presence of one very small geometric lunate. Our project sought to return to this site and conduct further research.

The recent geological history of the southern part of the Bannu Basin is largely a consequence of the uplift and folding of the Bhattani/Waziristan-Sulaiman (south-western and western sides) and the Marwat and Khisor Ranges (eastern and southern sides), following the Himalayan orogenesis. This movement formed a large depression, gradually filled with silt and loam of alluvial and lacustrine origin. In this area, the depositional agents that combine to shape the



Top: Thick sand deposits along the banks of the Gambila River near Kot Kashmir (photograph by P. Biagi, 2019)

Middle: Location of site Gul Shah Tup, GS-2 (red dot), and other lithic scatters discovered in the Red Desert in 2019 (white dots). The blue dot is the Neolithic settlement of Sheri Khan Tarakai (drawing by E. Starnini and R. Nisbet)

Bottom: The sand dune marking the location of Gul Shah Tup from the north. The red dot is GS-2, from which the lithic artefacts discussed in this paper have been collected (photograph by P. Biagi, 2019)

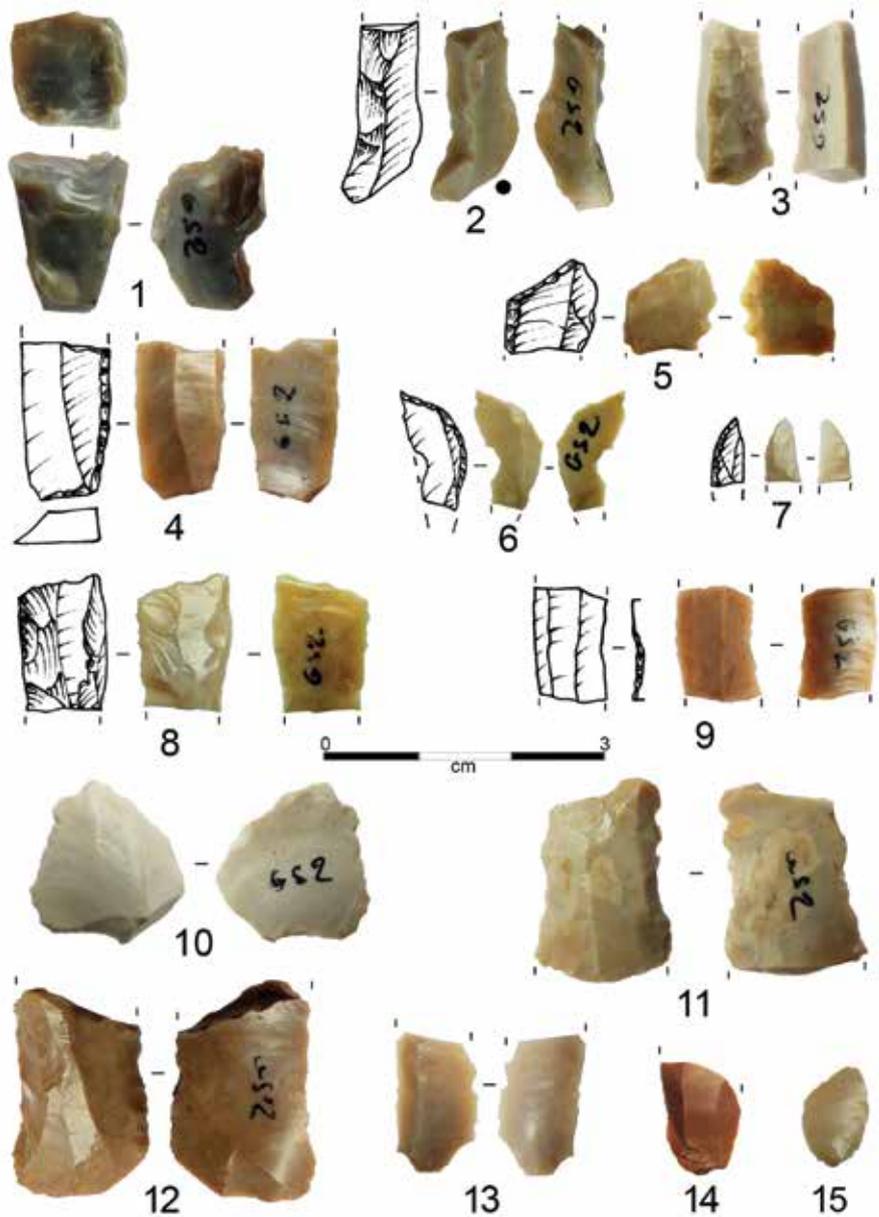


present plain are the Gambila River, which flows from the north, and a series of large fans due to many ephemeral tributaries, which flow from the western ranges. According to resistivity data, the floodplain, the upper part of which is exposed along the riverbanks, reaches a depth of some 100 metres.

Small windborne sand dunes and mounds, which formed under the present climate, are scattered across the corrugated plain of the Red Desert. Gul Shah Tup (GS) is one of these features. The mound, located close to the village of the same name, is located at the boundary of an agricultural area, some 15 km east of Jani Khel and less than two kilometres from the meandering Gambila River to the east. The sand mound is c. six metres higher than the surrounding plain (N32°45'14.1" - E70°40'26.0"). On its top (311 m above sea level) a few large, rounded blocks show the position of one or more Muslim graves. Close to its south-eastern base, GS-2 marks a scatter of chert artefacts described in this paper.



The knapped stone assemblage was collected over a surface of c. 20 m radius of GS-2 by three people in about one hour on 28 June 2019. The collection consists of 181 artefacts made from a good quality waxy chert of different colours, from reddish grey to brown, grey and white, three



GS-2: Knapped chert artefacts:  
 1 – exhausted microlithic core,  
 2 & 3 – crested microbladelets,  
 4 & 5 – backed bladelets and  
 truncation, 6 & 7 – lunates,  
 8 & 9 – retouched bladelets,  
 10–12 – side and transversal  
 scrapers, 13 – proximal bladelet  
 fragment with pronounced butt,  
 14 – proximal bladelet fragment  
 with overhang abrasion,  
 15 – microflakelet with parasite  
 scar on the bulb (drawings and  
 photographs by E. Starnini)

radiolarian chert fragments, and two dusky red radiolarite flakelets. The chert was obtained from pebbles, suggested by 11 artefacts that had a thin, smooth pebble-cortex. The general impression is that the raw material does not come from the gravel terraces of Barrai Khuarra from which other varieties of chert were sampled during the 2019 survey, or from the course of the Tochi River. However, gravel lenses are known near Jani Khel, c. 20 km west of the site. Most artefacts collected from GS-2 are fragments of microlithic dimension. Only 31 (17%) are complete. The very high percentage of broken artefacts (83%) does not seem to be caused by trampling.

The knapped stone industry is represented by one exhausted microlithic prismatic core, two crested microbladelets, two fragments of backed bladelets and truncation, two fragments of geometric lunates, two microbladelets with inframarginal simple retouch, and three side or transversal scrapers. The

presence of one exhausted core along with core rejuvenation flakes and debitage wastes show that artefacts were knapped on the spot. This observation is reinforced by a few corticated pieces.

The lithic artefacts collected from the surface of GS-2 are unique within the general picture of the very few Late Pleistocene lithic assemblages so far discovered in Pakistan, where sites with backed bladelets and truncation are very rare. At present, only one site is known to have yielded a similar assemblage characterised by backed microbladelets, points and truncations, which is most probably to be attributed to the end of the Upper Palaeolithic. This latter, known as Mulri Hills 16 (MH-16), is located on a low hill just a few kilometres from the Arabian Sea shore in the eastern outskirts of Karachi in Lower Sindh. The site was discovered by A. R. Khan in the 1970s, during a geoarchaeological survey promoted by Karachi University. It led to the discovery of

an impressive number of Palaeolithic and Mesolithic sites, many of which have never been published.

The microlithic lunates from GS-2 show unique techno-typological and dimensional characteristics. They are very small and thin, which contrasts with all the other implements of this class of geometrics so far discovered in the Greater Indus Valley, most of which have been attributed to the Mesolithic period. The characteristics of the knapped stone artefacts suggest that GS-2 is to be attributed to the final stage of the Upper Palaeolithic.

With the exception of the Seri Khan Tarakai Middle Palaeolithic Levallois artefact, all the other finds discovered around Bannu before the 1980s, generically attributed to the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic, do not show any diagnostic techno-typological characteristics. Therefore, the assemblage retrieved from GS-2 is a very important exception. It shows that research in the Red Desert of Bannu Basin should be

continued and possibly intensified. The area was settled around the end of the Pleistocene, suggesting that more sites of this period with characteristics strictly comparable with those of Lower Sindh are most probably present in the surroundings.

#### *Acknowledgements*

The authors are very grateful to Ali Shah Haider and Romana Haider, for all their help and the organisation of our fieldwork in Bannu. Special thanks are due to Abdul Hussain, Chief of the Mian tribe, who provided hospitality, every sort of facility, and security during our stay in his Bannu city residence. The 2019 survey was made possible thanks to grants from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAECI), and the Society of Antiquaries of London.

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## Message from the President Clive Gamble: subscription increase

Every year we look carefully at our finances and in particular the subscription charge for members. The last time we raised subscriptions was fourteen years ago. Since then we have, through good management by our Treasurer, weathered all sorts of financial turbulence and inflation. We have kept costs down while at the same time increasing the benefits to members. You now have free online access to all PPS volumes even back to PPSEA 1905, an expanded full-colour PAST, online collections, discounts on the Research Series, more grants and an increased meetings programme, especially online as we have adjusted to life with the pandemic. But we have reached the point where these activities will become unsustainable without additional income.

Council agreed in 2019 that the following subscription rates would apply, but we then postponed their introduction when lockdowns began in 2020.

Member	existing £35	new £45
Student	existing £17.50	new £20
Retired	existing £35	new £35
Joint (in addition)	existing £5	new £5
Retired (without PPS)	existing £12.50	new £15

These increases will come into effect from 1 January 2022 and will have been formally presented to the AGM on 20 October. This timetable will give you time to change your Standing Order if that is how you pay. If you have online banking, as I do, it is a quick and simple matter. If not, please use the form enclosed with your copy of PAST for you to take to your bank. If there are any queries, please contact Tessa Machling, our Membership Secretary.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Prehistoric Society and we remain hopeful that before long we will be able to meet in person.

### Thanks to our PAST editor

This issue of PAST sees the departure of Dani Hoffman as its highly pro-active and efficient honorary editor after six years in the post. With her wide-ranging interests and vast network of European and British friends and colleagues, Dani has attracted a huge diversity of material to the newsletter, bringing us exclusives on the latest and best prehistoric discoveries and research projects from throughout Europe – and beyond – as well as keeping us all up to date on Society news and activities. With her winning smile, charm, and gentle but firm insistence few have been able to resist her request for articles or dared to miss her deadlines! I note the increasing frequency with which articles appearing in PAST are being cited in academic papers and books – testimony to the quality of material Dani has solicited from professional and non-professional archaeologists alike and presented to us in its pages. As she hands over to Susan Greaney, we thank her profusely for all her hard work and unfailing cheerfulness and wish her all the best in her (now not so) new position in Bergen.

*Julie Gardiner, Editor of PPS*

## Programme of meetings 2021–2022

<i>Date</i>	<i>Venue/Format</i>	<i>Details</i>
<b>Fri–Sat 18–19 June 2021</b>	<b>Conference &amp; Europa lecture</b> Online	<b>Europa 2021: People and Society in Late Prehistoric Europe</b> In honour of Prof. Colin Haselgrove, University of Leicester. Details of how to register can be found here: <a href="http://www.prehistoricsociety.org/events/event/Europa_conference_2021/">http://www.prehistoricsociety.org/events/event/Europa_conference_2021/</a>
<b>Mon 6 September 2021 7.30pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Online	<b><i>The real Peggy Piggott</i></b> by Dr Rachel Pope (University of Liverpool) and Dr Mairi Davies (Historic Environment Scotland) Prehistoric Society Lecture
<b>Mon 4 October 2021 (time tbc)</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Online	<b><i>Great Zimbabwe in popular imagination: revelations through the years</i></b> by Prof. Shadreck Chirikure (University of Cape Town and University of Oxford) Global Pasts lecture
<b>Weds 20 October 2021 5.00pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Blended (physical/virtual) Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House	<b>The 21st Sara Champion Memorial Lecture</b> <b><i>Genetic change and relatedness in Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age Britain</i></b> by Dr Tom Booth (Crick Institute)
<b>Tues 26 October 2021 6.30pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Blended (physical/virtual) Fusion Building, Talbot Campus, Bournemouth University BH12 5BB	<b><i>Rapa Nui (Easter Island): Myths and realities of an iconic past</i></b> by Prof. Sue Hamilton (UCL Institute of Archaeology, London) 5th Annual Pitt Rivers Lecture, supported by the Prehistoric Society. For further details and booking please visit: <a href="https://fifthpittiverslecture.eventbrite.co.uk">https://fifthpittiverslecture.eventbrite.co.uk</a>
<b>Fri 29 October 2021 7.30pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> The United Reform Church Hall, Church Road, Welwyn Garden City, AL8 6PR	<b><i>Hot stone technology at Bucklers Park, Crowthorne, Berkshire: The use and re-use of a persistent place during the Bronze and Iron Ages</i></b> by Helen Chittock (AOC Archaeology) and Rob Masefield (RPS Group) Annual joint lecture with Welwyn Archaeological Society
<b>Mon 1 November 2021 6.00pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Online	<b><i>Early humans in the English Channel region: La Cotte de St Brelade, Boxgrove &amp; other La Mancheland sites</i></b> by Dr Matt Pope (UCL) Annual joint lecture with Cambridge Antiquarian Society
<b>Tues 2 November 2021 (time tbc)</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Online	<b><i>Human-ecodynamics and the rise of monumentality in the Central Andes</i></b> by Prof. Ana Cecilia Mauricio (University of Maine) Global Pasts lecture
<b>Sat 6 November 2021 2.30pm</b>	<b>Lecture</b> Blended (physical/online) Norwich Castle Museum, Castle Meadow, Norwich	<b>Title tbc</b> , by Dr Robert Johnston (Sheffield University) Annual joint lecture with Norwich and Norfolk Archaeological Society
<b>11–22 November 2021 (date/time tbc)</b>	<b>Panel</b> Online	<b>Are Genes Deep History?</b> Panel discussion involving Dr Tom Booth (Crick Institute), Prof. Joanna Brück (University College Dublin), Dr Adam Rutherford (University College London) and Prof. Chris Stringer (Natural History Museum). Additional names to be announced. Partnered event as part of the Being Human Festival, Queen Mary University of London
<b>Mon 14 March 2022 (time tbc)</b>	<b>Lecture</b> National Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh EH1 1JF	<b>Title tbc</b> , by Prof. Annelou van Gijn (Leiden University) Biennial joint lecture with Society of Antiquaries of Scotland

We continue to work on our programme with more lectures to be announced later in the year. Please note, due to the ongoing situation with COVID-19, meetings may be liable to change, particularly those organised as in-person events.

Further details, including how to join virtual meetings, will be available online: <http://www.prehistoricsociety.org/events/>.

## The 23rd Annual Iron Age Research Student Symposium

The Manchester Centre for Archaeology and Egyptology was excited to host the 23rd Annual Iron Age Research Student Symposium at the University of Manchester (3–4 June 2020). The organising committee comprised of Emma Tollefsen, Matthew Hitchcock, Catherine Jones and Jane Barker, all from Manchester's Department of Classics, Ancient History, Archaeology and Egyptology. The symposium was originally planned as a traditional in-person event, however, when the Coronavirus pandemic hit, the committee responded in true pioneering spirit by moving the conference to a virtual format, 'A Conference with a Twist'. This enabled innovative research within Iron Age studies to be shared as in previous years, in the same supportive, informal atmosphere.

Emma Tollefsen opened the virtual conference by welcoming everyone and shared the hope that this new digital format would be a blueprint for future conferences, ensuring that postgraduates have a platform to meet as an active research community, and share our passion for archaeology in a post-Coronavirus environment. The keynote lecture was given by Melanie Giles on the enigmatic phenomenon of bog bodies and the case of Worsley Man (a local bog head kept at Manchester Museum with a fascinating curatorial history), in which she reflected on how new scientific advancements help us understand and re-situate these well-preserved human remains within the world of Late Iron Age Britain. This was followed by a lively debate on the ethics of handling, analysing and sampling ancient human remains, gaining access to rare archaeological materials, and how to tell the stories of past people and representations in museum settings.

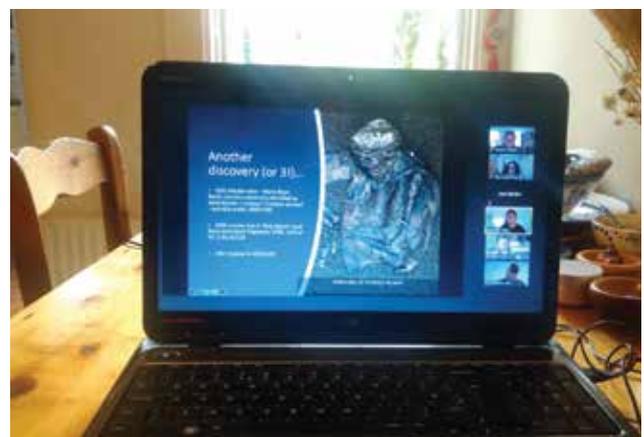
The rest of the day encompassed a variety of themes, with a focus particularly on depositional practices, the function of artefacts, and art. The first session, 'Settlement, Landscape and Environmental Studies' was chaired by Emma Tollefsen. This session saw Krystyna Truscoe's (University of Reading) paper on using aerial and LiDAR surveys to look at the role of linear dykes and territorial oppida biographies. Pablo Barruezo-Vaquero (University of Glasgow) presented a new approach using 'human ecodynamics', the study of the interrelationship between humans and the environment through space and time. Clodagh O'Sullivan (University College Cork) spoke about why particular artefacts were chosen to be deposited in wetland sites in Iron Age Ireland. The next session, 'Materials, Function and Art' was chaired by Lindsey Büster (University of York). Sarah Downum (University of Reading) discussed visual culture and decoration of non-metal artefacts in Iron Age Britain, followed by Rebecca Ellis' (University of Hull) paper on continental influences in the development and use of animal and human figures within La Tène art in England and Wales. Amber Rivers (University of Highlands and Islands) demonstrated how to identify the function of long-handled combs through creative practices.

The final session on 'Continental Connections' was chaired by Catherine Jones. Here Misha Enayat (University of

Southampton) examined practices of food consumption during the Later Iron Age in Britain. Tom Booth (Crick Institute) presented an ancient DNA study on the movement of people into Britain during the Middle–Late Bronze Age and the Iron Age, before Angela Pisani (VZW De Gallische Hoeve) discussed the open-air museum at Gaul Farm in Destelbergen, Belgium, a reconstruction of an Iron Age farm from the first century BC. These sessions highlighted the use of digital archaeology to preserve heritage and the many ways that experimental archaeology can engage the public.

The second day opened with two guest lectures by Early Career Researchers. Matthew Knight (National Museum of Scotland) discussed his research on recognising time-depth in Late Bronze Age and Iron Age metalwork hoards in Britain, while Helen Chittock (AOC Archaeology) spoke about new investigations into fragmentation processes and the breaking and making of early Celtic art. The remainder of the day focused on papers related to funerary archaeology and theoretical approaches. The first session on 'Death, Burial, Violence and Treatment of the Body' was chaired by Melanie Giles. Emma Tollefsen (University of Manchester) presented a study of two burials from Knapton Wold and demonstrated how scientific research on bones can tell social stories. Catherine Jones (University of Manchester) used regional case studies to explore the social role of swords and scabbards during the British Iron Age. This was followed by Matthew Hitchcock (University of Manchester) who drew on assemblage theory, post-humanism and the anthropology of art to re-frame the shield in Iron Age Britain, winning the annual *Best Finds Paper* award, presented by The Later Prehistoric Finds Group.

The final session of the conference 'Post-Humanist and Assemblage-Based Approaches' was chaired by Matthew Hitchcock. Jane Barker (University of Manchester) presented a new approach to horse gear, approaching them as human-animal-thing assemblages. Andrew Reynolds (University of Reading) provided new insights into old hoards from Wales



Participants watching the keynote lecture by Melanie Giles (University of Manchester) from the comfort of their own homes (Photo: Tessa Machling)



All participants were given a digital cut-out Iron Age roundhouse to decorate as part of the welcome package (Photos: Emma Tollefsen and Rosanna Hind)

and the Marches. Tiffany Treadway (Cardiff University) shared her research into the traditions of British Iron Age deposition practices, whilst the final presentation came from Jennifer Beamer (University of Leicester) who took an anthropological view of Iron Age textile technology.

The day closed with a reflection by Melanie Giles on the brilliant contributions made by the postgraduates during the conference and the Stay Home Stay Safe Prize Announcement by Emma Tollefsen, with a big thank you to the IARSS sponsors, including The Prehistoric Society and Manchester Museum. The conference concluded with virtual applause for all speakers, keynote and ECRs for their talks, and passing the 'e-baton' over to the University of Liverpool, who will host IARSS in 2021.

On behalf of the IARSS 2020 organising committee, we would like to thank everyone for their support and attendance – which made the digital conference such a success! This novel format allowed for over 250 delegates to participate at IARSS and gave people the freedom to dip in-

and-out of sessions around their other commitments. Virtual attendees tuned in from Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany and even Australia and Egypt, enabling research students from across the globe to share in the event. We are very proud that comments from attendees showed how this format helped to democratise access to the event, allowing people with care responsibilities to participate while home-schooling and commercial and professional archaeologists to engage in the conference while working from home. We hope a digital strand to IARSS is something which will be continued in the future. Lastly, we want to say how proud we are of the thriving Iron Age postgraduate community and the quality of research shared at the conference. We are privileged to have a preview of the future directions for the field and grateful to see vibrant collaborative work taking place between postgraduate researchers, national institutions and museums.

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## Global Pasts lecture series

The Prehistoric Society is delighted to announce a new six-part lecture series, entitled 'Global Pasts'. The core aim of this series is to promote equality, diversity and different narratives surrounding prehistory and the deep past from across the world beyond Europe. These lectures will be hosted online via Zoom once a month from October to March and will be free to attend.

Our first two speakers will be:

- Prof. Shadreck Chirikure (University of Cape Town and University of Oxford)  
Monday 4 October: *Great Zimbabwe in popular imagination: revelations through the years*
- Prof. Ana Cecilia Mauricio (Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú)  
Tuesday 2 November: *Human-ecodynamics and the rise of monumentality in the Central Andes*

Further details, including times and how to join, will be available via the Events page of our website. As we continue to develop this lecture series, we would like to invite you, as the membership, to get in touch with suggestions for speakers from different parts of the world that you may like to see within this series. If you have a suggestion, please contact Tessa Machling at [prehistoric@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:prehistoric@ucl.ac.uk).

*Matt Knight Hon. Meetings Secretary and Rachel Crellin Hon. Secretary*

## New light on Scotland's prehistoric rock art: the recent discovery of animal carvings at Dunchraigaig Cairn (Kilmartin, Scotland)

Prehistoric rock art in Scotland is known for its many thousands of cup-and-ring motifs and other variations of circular images, often referred to as Atlantic Rock Art. The recent discovery of red deer carvings (*Cervus elaphus*) in Dunchraigaig Cairn (Kilmartin), however, changes our perspectives on rock art in this country.

Dunchraigaig Cairn is a 30 m wide burial monument dated to the Early Bronze Age. It comprises two short cists and a larger cist with different characteristics beneath a cairn of cobbles. The larger cist, on the south-eastern side of the cairn, features a substantial schist capstone, about 4 m in length, supported by cobbled walls. Carvings of five animals were found on the underside of this capstone. When the monument was excavated in the 1860s and early 1920s, grave goods, including two Irish-style Bipartite Bowl Food Vessels dated to c.2160–2080 BC, were recovered from the two short cists. The large cist with the deer carvings lacked artefacts but contained the inhumed and cremated remains of 8 to 10 individuals. A whetstone, a greenstone axe and a flint knife were recovered from the cairn material near this cist but have since been lost. The early excavators of the monument suggested that this cist was originally a Neolithic tomb re-used during the Early Bronze Age when the two short-cists and cobbled cairn were added.

The animal carvings were first identified by Hamish Fenton while inspecting the capstone with raking light. He subsequently recorded the stone with Structure from Motion (SfM) photogrammetry, and the 3D model revealed the images of several animals. The find was reported in November 2020 to the Scotland's Rock Art Project (ScRAP) Team, who began a programme of research and visited the site in April 2021 once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. In the meantime, they interrogated a high-resolution 3D model, created by Historic Environment Scotland's Digital Documentation and Innovation team using an Artec Leo structured light scanner. The model was investigated with a range of renderings to highlight different surface features, including Meshlab's Radiance Scaling, multiple shading with LiDAR tools, and other digital enhancement techniques applied by the Curatorial Research Centre.

Whilst zoomorphs are common to other rock art traditions in Europe, including Atlantic Rock Art in Iberia, where horses and deer are depicted alongside cup-and-ring motifs, the discovery of animals at Dunchraigaig was unexpected. These are effectively the oldest animal carvings known in Scotland, and the clearest Neolithic/Early Bronze Age representations of deer in Britain. Although deer images of comparable date are reported on the Cronk yn How Stone on the Isle of Man, Goatscrag Hill rock shelter in Northumberland, and a carved chalk block from the flint mines of Cissbury, Sussex, these examples lack clear anatomical details and their interpretation remains debateable.

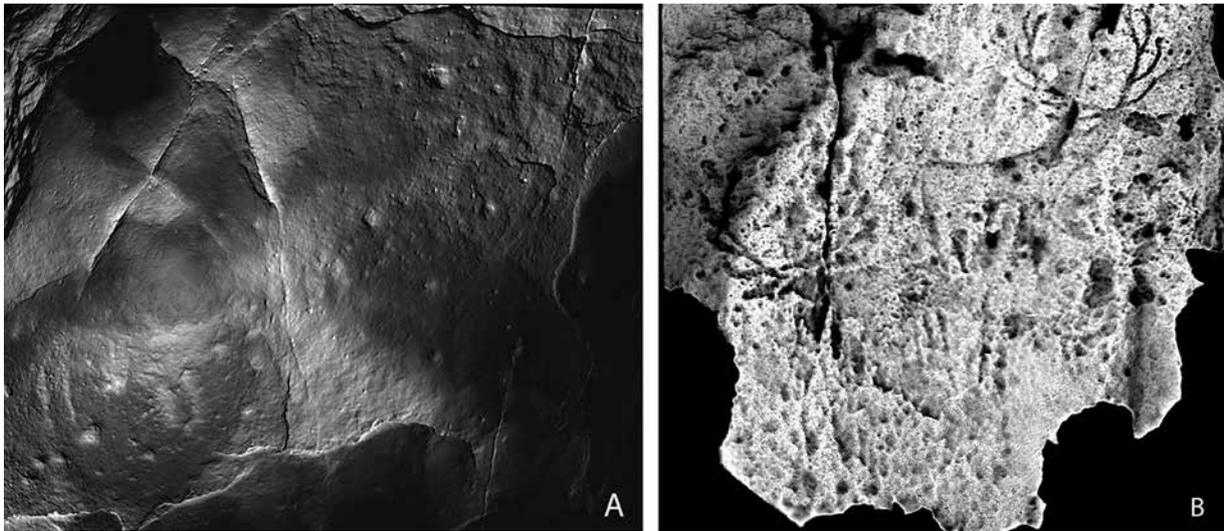
At Dunchraigaig Cairn, two of the carved animals represent adult stags, each measuring about 45 cm long, depicted in a semi-naturalistic fashion. The most distinct stag displays defined anatomical details including well-developed branching antlers, a long neck, pronounced rump, short tail and a cupmark to mark its sex. The antlers are shown in frontal view, whereas the heads and bodies are depicted in profile, a stylistic technique known as twisted perspective, featured in other prehistoric rock art traditions elsewhere in Europe. These stags are the most visible motifs on the stone, despite being situated at one edge of the cist and partly obscured by the cobbled walling. In a more central position on the capstone two further animals were carved in a different, more stylized manner. They are smaller (around 15 cm long) and have few anatomical details, although cupmarks marking their sex and a possible antler on one of them suggests they are juvenile male deer. Positioned alongside each other, their stretched necks indicate movement, as if they were climbing up a slope, with the ground marked by a natural fissure. These two juvenile deer are very weathered and almost invisible to the naked eye and could be the oldest motifs on this stone. A fifth quadruped located underneath the two larger stags is very weathered and damaged. Identification of this animal is problematic since only parts of its body, including a short tail, are distinguishable, but we can speculate that it too depicts a deer. All the animals were created by pecking, with visible tool marks preserved on the larger stags, whose bodies and heads are entirely pecked out.

Given the position of the carvings on the capstone, and the restricted space beneath it inside the cist, it is safe to assume that these zoomorphs were carved prior to construction of the monument. Weathering of the grooves suggests they were exposed to the elements before the slab was built into the cairn and were therefore created at least during the Early Bronze Age but are likely to be older.

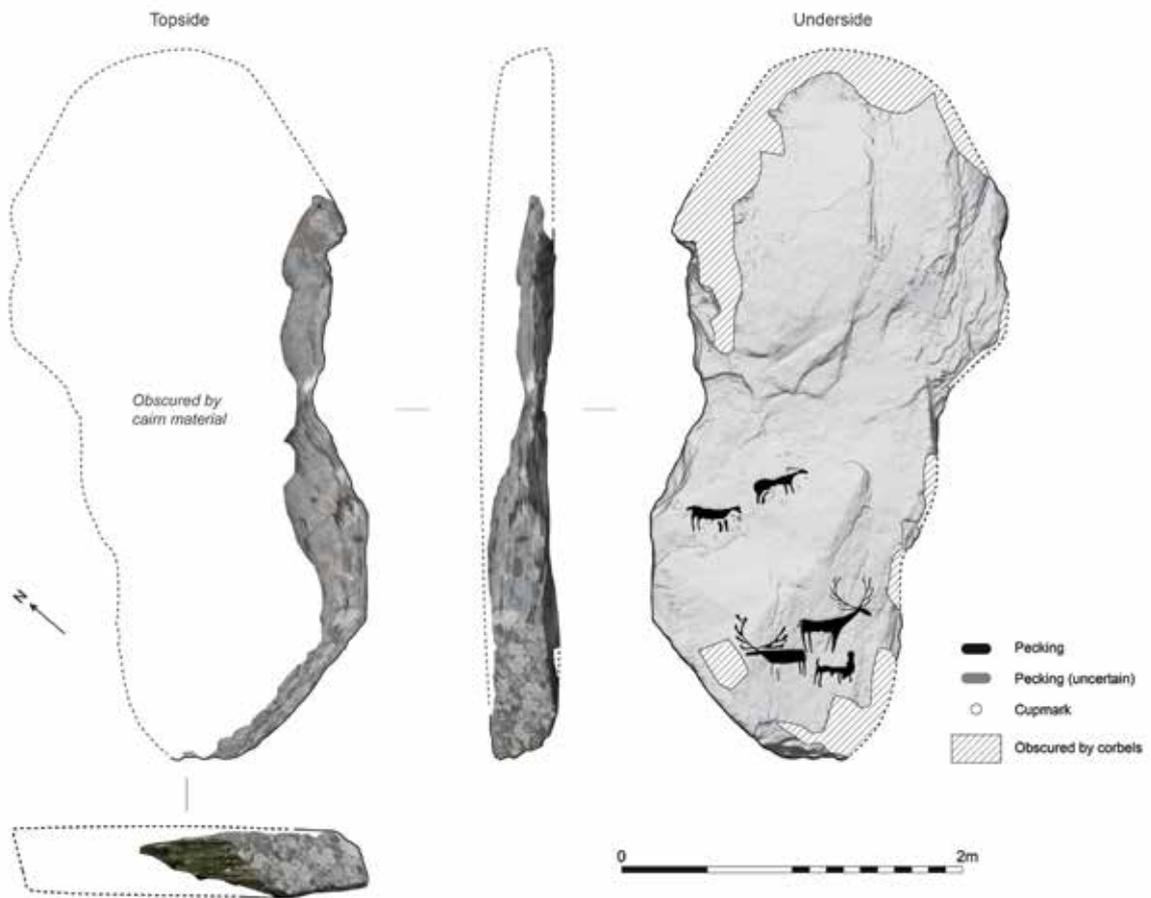
The find of zoomorphic carvings at Dunchraigaig Cairn raises interesting questions regarding their chronology,



The south-eastern cist of Dunchraigaig Cairn in the context of the monument at Kilmartin. The deer carvings were found on the underside of the large capstone.



A high-resolution 3D model of the capstone was produced with an Artec Leo structured light scanner. The images show details of the carvings: A) the smaller and more eroded juvenile deer, B) the larger stags with wide branching antlers, the more visible carvings on the capstone. (Renderings processed by Tom Goskar (Curatorial Research Centre) for ScRAP).



Drawing and interpretation of the animal carvings at Dunchraigaig Cairn (by Guillaume Robin).

the relationship between red deer and funerary contexts, which has parallels in other European regions (e.g. Orca dos Juncais in Portugal), their association with the Atlantic Rock Art tradition, and the inter-regional connections between Scotland and Europe in the 3rd millennium BC. The discovery also prompts the question of whether there

are other animal carvings of this date in Britain and, if so, where are they most likely to be located?

*Joana Valdez-Tullett (joana.valdez-tullett@hes.scot) and Tertia Barnett (tertia.barnett@hs.scot), Scotland's Rock Art Project, Historic Environment Scotland*

## Iron Age Coins in Britain – a digital typology

The Iron Age in Britain was a period of social change, from shifts in communal identities to increasing foreign influences, as evidenced by developments and innovations in technologies and material culture. This was also the period in which the first coins appeared. In Britain, Iron Age (or ‘Celtic’ in older terminology) coins, which feature ornate imagery and complex designs, were used and produced variably through time from around the 2nd century BC to the mid-1st century AD. They were originally imported but were quickly locally produced with their own striking iconography. Such complex imagery has made their purpose and function the subject of much debate, but they are doubtless a major source of information on late Iron Age society, trade, religious beliefs, and continental contacts. Yet coins have often been neglected in broader studies of Iron Age material culture, and any investigation of them requires a large dataset on which we can conduct detailed analyses.

Fortunately, a number of Iron Age coin resources exists, such as the Celtic Coin Index (CCI) at the School of Archaeology at Oxford, which contains around 70,000 index cards of around 50,000 specimens. We are currently in the process of scanning all the paper index cards in the CCI and digitising the data from the cards that are still entirely analogue. A detailed study of the CCI and other collections resulted in the key typology: *Ancient British Coins* (ABC), published in 2010. ABC includes 999 coin types and is now the leading typology of Iron Age coins found in Britain. The authors of this book were generous enough to grant the CCI permission to edit and digitise the typology and make it freely available online through a new dedicated website: Iron Age Coins in Britain (IACB).

The IACB website is built on the principles of linked open data espoused by the Nomisma.org community. Nomisma.org is a collaborative project which provides stable identifiers for numismatic concepts, such as production places, denominations, and political entities. Any database, regardless of native language, can implement these identifiers, as well as a standardised semantic data model, in order to contribute numismatic data through a centralised, multi-



A ‘Bury A’ silver unit from East Anglia, which depicts a face and a ‘serpent’ head on one side and a prancing horse on the other (Photo: Ian R. Cartwright, Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford)

lingual interface. This interface displays example specimens of each coin type, and queries of the underlying Iron Age knowledge graph to facilitate the visualisation of the production and circulation of these types over time and space.

At the time of writing, the IACB website now draws in over 37,000 coins from the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the British Museum, the Münzkabinett in Berlin, and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. By early 2022, it will also include the remainder of the coins from the CCI. The IACB joins a group of ten coin typology websites which use the Nomisma identifiers to link coin collections from across the globe. It is, however, the first that focuses solely on Iron Age (non-Roman, non-Greek) coins. We hope that it will serve as a resource for anyone, from researchers to finds specialists, and will help further integrate coins into wider studies of Iron Age material culture.

Iron Age Coins in Britain website: <https://iacb.arch.ox.ac.uk/>  
Ancient British Coins book: <https://celticcoins.com/shop/books/ancient-british-coins-2/>

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## Kouvaras Cave: a new Early Holocene site in East Attica, Greece

The Kouvaras cave excavation and preservation project is currently underway, and material study as well as various laboratory analyses, are ongoing. Some interesting preliminary results are, however, available. The project is run by the Ephorate of Palaeoanthropology and Speleology, the directorate of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports responsible for the protection, preservation and research of caves and palaeontological sites.

The cave occupies a hilly inland location (173 m above sea level) in the outskirts of Kouvaras village in East

Attica. It has been formed in the ‘Lower Marble’ of the autochthonous unit of Attica (Jurassic), along a karstified fault zone. The fallen boulders found scattered near the entrance indicate that part of the cave’s roof has collapsed and likely extended further out in the past. Two trenches have been opened so far, both near the collapsed entrance. All the information presented here comes from Trench 1, excavated in 2019.

The geological stratigraphy of the cave consists of five soil horizons. The topsoil (about 50 cm thick) includes



*Left: Location of the site in Eastern Attica, about 25 km south-east of Athens*

*Below: General view of Kouvaras cave*



debris, angular breccia with poor grading, and fine-grained sandy-clay material with conglomerates of limestone composition, partially recrystallized. The second soil horizon is a fine-grained clayish sediment with unevenly distributed concentrations of land snails and conglomerates. A horizon of ash follows, while further below, there is a fine-grained, black clay horizon, possibly associated with burning activities. The lowest horizon consists of clay, not particularly compacted, with appearances of conglomerates of limestone composition, partially recrystallized.

The 2019 excavation yielded a large number of finds, lithics being amongst the most numerous. An undisturbed burial and other human and animal bones were also found, alongside dense land snail concentrations and a small number of seashells. Finally, a few artifacts made of stone and/or shell, such as beads, were also recorded.

The anthropological material consists of a complete articulated skeleton found in a burial context and a few scattered bones, possibly of another individual. The preliminary macromorphological examination of the skeleton – conducted according to international established protocols – identifies an adult male with no evidence of any obvious pathologies. The burial, a primary inhumation in a contracted position, suggests practical and symbolic aspects in the manipulation and treatment of the dead. Similarities with other contemporary examples suggest the relative homogeneity of mortuary behavior during the early Holocene. The human remains from Kouvaras cave have good potential for the study of early Holocene life and mortuary behaviour and are currently under multi-disciplinary examination.

Radiocarbon estimates obtained directly from the human remains indicate a burial of the 10th or 9th millennia cal BC, corroborating the relative chronology assigned to the corresponding archaeological contexts (see below). Future analyses will focus on testing complementary analytical methods (SEM, endoscopy, spectroscopy, and histology) to attain a reliable differential diagnosis and build up a rigid epidemiological database. At present, ancient DNA, stable

isotope, and strontium analyses are in progress to trace origins, migration events and population movements, biological relationships, dietary levels, and residential patterns. The use of quartz and different flint varieties, including reddish, reddish-brown and various shades of grey coloured stone, dominate the lithic assemblage of Kouvaras. Obsidian finds, both debitage and finished tools, are also present, although in small numbers. The metric characteristics of the artifacts show an industry producing lithics of small dimensions. Cores and technical pieces of flint and probably quartz suggest that these were processed at the site. Most of the cores are exhausted. Single or double platform cores were mostly knapped to produce blades/bladelets. The most typical tool types are geometric microliths, mainly lunates, backed bladelets and end scrapers. The application of the microburin technique for the production of geometric microliths is also documented.

Regarding animal bones, breakage patterns are advanced and identifiable bones make up only 1–2% of the total



*A view of the cave's surroundings*



*Lithics from the cave*

assemblage. Very few red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and wild ass (*Equus hydruntinus*) (unburnt) elements have been recorded, compared with other assemblages of this date. However, the relative frequencies of brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), and possibly of birds, seem higher. Great bustard (*Otis tarda*) bones were also present. Most of those elements seem to have been burnt under relatively low temperatures of an open hearth. Species such as red deer, wild ass, hare, and great bustard point to drier, open conditions than wetter ones, but the major trends related to possible differences in the natural environment and human management between phases need further clarification. Low-return animals and birds seem to have yielded more remains. The range of species from Kouvaras is rather common in Attica towards the onset of the Mesolithic (the only other stratified sample so far comes from the so-called Schisto cave on Mount Aegaleo, Attica) and comparable to archaeofauna from late Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic layers at Kleissoura and Franchthi caves in the Peloponnese, sites which also have assemblages that indicate a temporary increase in small game and a decrease of ungulate fauna.

The relative dating of Kouvaras based on information extracted from its archaeofaunal data is further corroborated by the macroscopic analysis of the lithic assemblages. These, on typo-technological grounds, can be assigned to the late Upper Palaeolithic industrial tradition, also present during the early Mesolithic period. Thus, they both agree with the available radiocarbon dates, which indicated deposits belonging to the 10th and 9th millennia BC.

The early Holocene record of Greece and the Aegean was until recently poorly understood and unresearched, due to the ideological formation and tradition of Aegean prehistory, which focused more on Mycenaean and Minoan Bronze

Age periods. Concurrent with that were methodological and research approaches of Stone Age archaeology which treated the Mesolithic period as a transient stage that led to the food production economy. Moreover, there was also a preference for excavating Neolithic tell sites, with the expectation of identifying Mesolithic remains in their basal levels, which would make a strong argument for cultural continuity between the two periods. The adoption of new research strategies, such as targeted surface surveys and excavations on islands and upland locations as well as caves, has yielded new data that indicate the presence of early Holocene sites in a variety of landscape settings. This evidence can tell us about complicated economic patterns, cultural affinities and developments that have only recently been recognized and studied. Kouvaras cave will add much to what we already know concerning the Aegean early Holocene record.

#### *Acknowledgements*

We are grateful to the Aegean Non-Profit Organization, without the help of which fieldwork and study of the finds would not have been possible, and to Andreas Darlas, director of the Ephorate of Palaeoanthropology and Speleology, Ministry of Culture and Sports, for his overall support.

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<sup>1,3,4</sup> Ephorate of Palaeoanthropology and Speleology, Ministry of Culture and Sports; <sup>2</sup> New York University in Athens; <sup>5</sup> Ministry of Culture and Sports; <sup>6</sup> Hellenic Open University/ University of Volos; <sup>7</sup> National and Technical University of Athens; <sup>8</sup> National Centre for Scientific Research, 'Demokritos'

The deadline for submissions for PAST 99 is 13 September 2021. Contributions to Editor, Susan Greaney, English Heritage, Bristol and Cardiff University, Cardiff, UK. Email: pasteditor@gmail.com. Contributions as e-mail attachments are preferred (either .docx or .rtf files) with illustrations sent as .jpeg, .tif or .pdf files. The book reviews editor is Pippa Bradley, c/o Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 6EB. Email: p.bradley@wessexarch.co.uk. Queries over subscriptions and membership should go to the Society administrator at the London address on the front cover. Email: t.machling@ucl.ac.uk