MESSAGE FROM GILL

Oxford Archaeology in 2014 is an organisation looking forwards and outwards. We are delighted to be launching our new strategy to take us to 2020 (see opposite), with the ambition of being the leading heritage practice focused on delivering high-quality archaeological projects, providing good value for our clients, communicating exciting and up-to-date information to the public, and being a stimulating, safe and rewarding place to work. Our vision is to be at the forefront of advancing knowledge about the past and working in partnership with others for public benefit.

A key element of the strategy is communication, both externally and internally. Since March 2007, we have produced 30 in-house magazines, one every quarter in printed and digital formats, and each packed with project news, in addition to providing information for staff on employment matters. Over time, they have become more glossy, but the challenge has been deciding what to exclude, not how to fill the space. They are a testament to the huge variety of work that has been under way, from strategic studies and research, through an immense diversity of fieldwork, to news on our publications. We thought it was time to share this little gem with you.

In this special edition of In Touch you will find some highlights from the last year at OA. They range in time from Palaeolithic knapping sites in Bexhill to war art at RAF Upper Heyford, and geographically from the Roman extra-mural settlement at Maryport to Dover Castle. Buildings archaeology, community archaeology, work on infrastructure, housing, urban development and utilities schemes, as well as items on a range of heritage services, can all be found here.

We also have special features which showcase five particular aspects of our work over the year: our HLF community projects; National Heritage Protection Projects undertaken for English Heritage; Burials Archaeology; Industrial Archaeology; and a review of our 40th anniversary celebrations.

I hope you enjoy this feast of information; we look forward to sharing more news with you soon. Read the latest news on our website, http://oxfordarchaeology.com/, and follow us via Twitter (@oatweet), facebook, and LinkedIn.

Gill Hey
Chief Executive Officer, Oxford Archaeology
THE VISION

At the forefront of advancing knowledge about the past and working in partnership with others for public benefit

THE STRATEGY

- Be a leading edge heritage company, influencing the profession and archaeological practice for the public good
- Provide high quality services and good value for our clients, curators and consultants
- Embrace technology and develop innovative processes
- Communicate effectively internally
- Build a sound financial platform
- Communicate effectively with the general public
- Be an exciting, safe and rewarding place to work
OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY AT 40

In October 2013, Oxford Archaeology celebrated its 40th anniversary with a reception, presentations, and a chance for friends, colleagues and guests to catch up and share memories of forty years of archaeological success. There was much to celebrate.

From its beginnings in 1973 as the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, Oxford Archaeology has grown to become the largest and longest-established independent archaeology and heritage practice in Europe. In that time, Oxford Archaeology has been instrumental in developing and shaping modern British archaeology, notably by pioneering methods of large-scale excavation and sampling for biological and environmental remains, and designing and successfully delivering archaeological projects for highly-complex infrastructure projects, such as High Speed 1 and Heathrow Terminal 5.

OA has provided heritage development and training in China, Eastern Europe and the Caribbean, and fostered long-standing partnerships with other archaeological organisations, construction companies, universities and governmental bodies. And as an educational charity, OA continues to provide opportunities for the public and local community groups to engage with their archaeology through exhibitions, open days, and community archaeology projects. Often this work is supported by national and regional bodies, such as English Heritage and the National Trust.

Over the past 40 years, the company has earned a reputation for a high level of expertise and knowledge as it has strived to meet one of its central, and original, aims – to promote archaeological research and to disseminate it widely through publication and teaching for the benefit of the public. OA has an enviable publication record, having produced over 180 reports, monographs and booklets, as well as countless journal reports and papers. Moreover, its staff have spoken at conferences and archaeological society meetings, and featured in documentaries and other TV programmes, including Time Team, Meet the Ancestors, and Digging for Britain.

It was only fitting, then, that the special AGM held in October at the King’s Centre, Osney Mead, brought together staff past and present to celebrate OA’s achievements. The afternoon began with a reception and buffet. Staff from all three offices mingled with former staff, staff from partner organisations, clients, curators, academics and other special guests as they looked over the very impressive display of publications and panels of exhibition posters.

The reception was followed by a series of presentations. CEO Gill Hey introduced the chair of the Board of Trustees, Professor Chris Gosden, who reflected on importance of the occasion, and introduced the first of the three former directors due to speak. Tom Hassall, who led the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit from 1973 to 1985, spoke about the background to the formation of the unit, the dedication of its staff, and its significant successes. David Miles, who was director from 1988 to 1999, talked about the unit’s expansion across Britain and abroad and the challenges of a new competitive regime in the late 1980s. David Jennings, who was Oxford Archaeology’s CEO from 1999 to 2013, spoke about welcoming OA North and OA East into the organisation, the experience of working in France, and steering OA through the worst recession for decades.

Gill Hey then spoke about OA today, and introduced Julian Munby, who presented the highlights of OA’s work over the past 40 years. This was followed by Gill’s optimistic assessment of OA’s future, and after Chris Gosden’s closing remarks, it was time for tea, a piece of birthday cake, and distribution of a special ‘party bag’ containing a 40th anniversary booklet, a reproduction of a special Oxfordshire edition of Current Archaeology, and a list of all OA’s publications.

The 40th anniversary event was an enjoyable and inspiring afternoon, which not only looked back to past achievements, but forward to exciting challenges and further successes.
Over the past 12 months or so, some of Oxford Archaeology's high-profile projects and discoveries have attracted national, and sometimes international, media coverage on television, in the newspapers, and on news websites. Information about one of our sites – the Viking mass grave from Weymouth – even came to a cinema near you! Then there have been book launches and exhibitions, as well as open days and community events.

Time Team may have left our screens, but Sir Tony Robinson returned to Channel 4 with 'Walking Through History', to which OA made two contributions. In one programme, Sir Tony walked through the Roman military landscape of the Lake District, and Rachel Newman, Senior Executive Officer at OA North, was at the Roman fort of Ravenhall to meet him. In another episode, Sir Tony walked along the Leeds and Liverpool canal with OA North's industrial archaeology expert, Ian Miller.

Discoveries by OA formed part of a number of exhibitions. There was a display of OA's sites at Westhawk Farm and Orbital Park at an event celebrating recent archaeological work in Ashford, Kent, and finds from Crossrail were on display at the Crossrail Visitor Information Centre in London. Flint and pottery and other objects from the Bexhill-Hastings link road were on display at Bexhill Museum, East Sussex. The major event of the year was the British Museum's 'Vikings: Life and Legend' exhibition. The centrepiece of the exhibition was the spectacular Roskilde 6 ship, but no less impressive was the display of skeletons from the mass grave of Vikings uncovered by OA on the Weymouth Relief Road, Dorset. The skeletons also appeared in 'Vikings Live', a special film of the exhibition presented by historians Bettany Hughes and Michael Wood and shown in cinemas around the world.

The publication of the mass grave and its companion volume on the prehistoric, Roman and post-Roman sites along the relief road were officially launched at the Dorset County Museum in Dorchester in April this year. The previous month, OA North launched its book on Viking-age burials – the cemetery at Cumwhitton, near Carlisle – and hosted a Viking-themed conference at Carlisle's Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery. Another important monograph – OA South's report on the archaeological recovery and identification of soldiers who died during the First World War Battle of Fromelles – was launched in Fromelles in July on the occasion of the opening of a museum of the battle and a service of commemoration dedicated to recently identified Australian soldiers. A new museum was also opened in Bath. The Ralph Allen Cornerstone Centre in Combe Down celebrates the history of the village and its historic stone mines, and includes displays of photographs and key finds from OA's ten-year investigation of the mines. In Peterborough, OA East's Romans of Fane Road community archaeology project was launched at a community centre near the site by Stewart Jackson MP and the East of England representative of the Heritage Lottery Fund, Philip Venning. Throughout 2013 and 2014, stories about OA's discoveries have appeared in local, national and international media outlets. The BBC News website, for example, has published features on the Bexhill to Hastings link road, the Maryport Roman Settlement project, Crossrail, and the “Peggy”, an 18th century yacht trapped in a dock in the Isle of Man. Bexhill to Hastings was also appeared on ITV News, and the local press have featured items on Bold Lane, Derby, and the Romans of Fane Road. In addition, British Archaeology magazine ran an article on the Weymouth mass grave, and an article on the Fromelles project will appear in the Christmas edition of Current World Archaeology.
URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Regeneration and development of former industrial areas, urban centres, commercial buildings, and historic townscape have provided opportunities for Oxford Archaeology to investigate the hidden history beneath our towns and cities.

Inside Ashbury’s Carriage Works, Manchester

From January to March 2014, staff from OA North excavated the remains of Ashbury’s Carriage Works for P P Plasma Ltd in Gorton, east Manchester, ahead of industrial redevelopment.

John Ashbury was the son of a cobbler who rose to become one of Britain’s leading engineers during the mid 19th century. By the late 1840s he had established a works in Gorton, which was to quickly become the largest manufacturer of railway carriages, wagons, horse drawn trams, boilers and plant in the country, exporting rolling stock, cast iron railway bridges and water towers worldwide. The engineering process was so refined at the works that raw materials could be brought in to the Manchester site at 07:15 AM and the finished carriage would be at Kings Cross, London, by 10:00 AM the following day. The works ceased production in 1928 and subsequently became a freight marshalling yard for Cammell Laird. Following its decommissioning at some time between 1948 and 1975, the works were left as an expanse of waste ground and many of the records had been lost.

The 2014 excavation offered a fantastic opportunity to bring to light to one of the forgotten centres of engineering from the golden age of British industry. Much of the works had been removed by later construction, and so the excavation concentrated on the last remaining area covering some of the heavy engineering and assembly sheds, a series of rail tracks and cranes linking the different processing areas, the offices and canteen, and a siding leading onto the main railway.

Graham Mottershead

Body of evidence – Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford

In 2013 and 2014, Oxford Archaeology carried out an excavation at the site of the Radcliffe Infirmary burial ground in Oxford. The works were commissioned by RB Development Limited, on behalf of Oxford University’s Estates Services in advance of the development of the site as the Blavatnick School of Government.

The excavation – and post-excavation analysis – were keenly anticipated, as the hospital cemetery was likely to reveal important information on the population, health, and medical practices of 18th and 19th century Oxford.

As expected, the results of the excavation were exciting. The majority of the burials were complete skeletons laid out in simple coffins, though a number of amputated limbs were also recovered from shallow pits. Amputations were fairly common, but we also recorded a trepanation and several craniotomies. Evidence of disease and trauma is present on the majority of the skeletons. We have seen signs of syphilis, leg ulcers, bone cancer, some quite horrendous fractures (including several which would have led to the individuals’ deaths) and even one potential murder victim.

The burials were carefully and sensitively lifted, recorded and analysed, and the post-assessment report on the site has now been completed. Further insights are expected during the analysis and reporting stage.

Mark Gibson
Far from standing still, the colleges of the University of Oxford have seen in recent decades almost constant maintenance and development, much of which has required archaeological services. Oxford Archaeology has been at the forefront of this work, having been inside practically every college on behalf of the university’s Estates Services or individual colleges.

One recent project has involved excavations at New College ahead of a comprehensive refurbishment and upgrading of the kitchens, buttery, pastry room, bar and hall. The site sits within the north-east corner of historic Oxford, within a few metres of the best preserved stretch of medieval walls. Constructed between 1380-6, the kitchens and hall form part of a larger, contemporary complex, which includes the chapel and cloister, which remains virtually completely intact.

In summer 2013, work focused on pre-college archaeology with a small excavation located between the kitchen and the city walls. This provided an opportunity to investigate a section of the visually unexciting but academically interesting late Saxon earthen burh rampart. From December 2013, excavation within the 14th century kitchen began. The modern concrete floor was removed to reveal extensive in-situ beaten earth and plaster floors interleaved with charcoal rich occupation deposits. The primary plaster floor was seen to extend over much of the kitchen. Notably, it was heavily scorched for up to 3m from the north wall which, when the later render was removed, revealed the blocked-in original fireplace adjacent to an original doorway. In consultation with the construction project’s design team, much of the original floor and occupation deposits were left in situ and preserved beneath a layer of sand, covered by a plastic membrane and free-running shingle.

Ben Ford

Jubilee Colliery, Greater Manchester

Community archaeology projects have allowed local communities and individuals to become directly involved in the preservation, investigation and promotion of their local heritage and we have worked with various partners to achieve this. A recent example is the ‘Unearthing the Past’ project at Jubilee Colliery at Shaw in Greater Manchester.

Jubilee Colliery was one of the most important collieries in the Oldham Coalfield, supplying coal and coke to many of the cotton mills and factories in the area. The colliery was founded in 1845, when a shaft was sunk into the Mountain Mine, which lies 99m below the surface. Many of the buildings were demolished when the colliery closed in 1932, and the abandoned site was allowed to be reclaimed by nature.

In 2012, Groundwork Oldham & Rochdale, an environmental charity that manages the site, launched ‘Unearthing the Past’, a pilot project intended to rekindle the local interest in the historic colliery by revealing the hidden structures and establishing the extent of the surviving remains. Building on the success of this initial work, Groundwork Oldham & Rochdale secured additional funding from the Heritage Lottery to run a second, larger, stage to the project. The volunteer-led excavation of the site began in mid-June 2014. By the end of the third week, more than 50 volunteers had actively participated in the excavation, with a core group attending every day.

The first target for excavation was the mound marking the site of the boiler house and chimney, the foundations of which were found to be largely intact. Local primary schools were also involved, and were provided with dedicated sessions in the classroom, coupled with days on site where pupils were tasked with unearthing the buried remains of some of the coke ovens.

Ian Miller
Jigsaw Cambridgeshire

Jigsaw Cambridgeshire, a partnership between OA East and Cambridgeshire County Council and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is an exciting five-year project (beginning in 2012) designed to support and develop community archaeology in Cambridgeshire. Jigsaw supports local archaeology societies by providing free training, advice and equipment and helping to set up local Archaeology Action Groups.

During the earlier part of last year, Jigsaw’s community archaeologists provided training, equipment, and on-site support for resistivity surveys conducted by the Warboys Archaeology Group, GamArch in Gamlingay, Cambridge Archaeology Field Group, and the Fen Edge Archaeology Group. Meanwhile, another Archaeology Action Group, RamArc, started in Ramsey.

Later in the year, Cambridge Archaeology Field Group was at Wimpole Hall, excavating test pits to find evidence of the early Saxon settlement as well as later medieval activity. The Warboys Archaeology Project carried out its first practical archaeological project in the garden of Warboys Manor House, and Covington History Group was helped to develop its geophysical survey skills.

The Ditherington Flax Mill and Maltings, Shrewsbury

OA North has carried out various investigations at the Ditherington Flax Mill – the oldest iron-framed building in the world – since 2009, and in April and May 2013, carried out a public-led excavation funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

This excavation targeted a group of former outbuildings that were associated with an early 19th-century apprentice house. Several phases of development were identified, and fascinating new evidence for the water supply to the mill’s former gas plant was discovered. Four days of post-excavation work followed, during which the volunteers consolidated the archive, processed and researched the finds, and wrote contributions for the report.

An open weekend at the flax mill, which attracted nearly 2,000 visitors, provided a fitting finale to the excavation, and demonstrated the huge public interest in the site. A committed band of volunteers were hard at work for these two days, so visitors were able to view an archaeological excavation in progress.

The project truly was a public-led archaeological investigation, and was strongly supported by volunteers from the Friends of the Flaxmill Maltings and the local community, who participated in digging and post-excauation work. Pupils from two secondary schools, Sundorne and The Grange, attended for five sessions of two hours, which enabled them to be involved in practical work and gain a gradual build up of historical knowledge and archaeological skills.

Jo Richards and Jemima Woolverton

David Maron
In August 2013, OA North began the first of two seasons of fieldwork at Maryport, on the west coast of Cumbria, on behalf of the Hadrian’s Wall Trust, and funded by the philanthropist Christian Levet. The stone fort, established in the AD 120s, was a key element of the coastal defences that formed an integral part of the Hadrian’s Wall frontier. As such, Roman Maryport represents a significant site in the Frontiers of the Roman Empire: Hadrian’s Wall World Heritage Site.

The work was largely carried out by volunteers, with well over 100 people being involved across both excavation seasons. Additionally, the site was regularly visited by parties of local schoolchildren, who were given the opportunity to dig real Roman features, while site tours and open days also proved extremely popular.

For the first season in 2013, a single building plot within the settlement was selected for investigation. This was largely associated with a stone ‘strip-building’ fronting the main road. The building may have been constructed in the early 3rd century AD, but had almost certainly gone by the end of the century. The area of investigation was expanded in 2014, revealing two phases of timber structures pre-dating the stone building. Overwhelmingly, the finds are indicative of an essentially ‘civilian’ milieu, with overtly military equipment restricted to an iron spearhead and a fragment of mail armour.

John Zant and Stephen Rowland
As an educational charity, Oxford Archaeology has a mission to promote archaeology to as wide an audience as possible, and since its inception in 1994, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has provided an invaluable avenue for obtaining grant aid to deliver public and research archaeology projects across the United Kingdom. The majority of OA’s work in this area has been centred at the Cambridge and Lancaster offices, whose historical links to their local areas have been a catalyst for working with partners (among them local societies, county councils, district councils, the National Trust and National Parks) and the HLF to deliver opportunities for local people to become involved in archaeology, as well as undertaking important research and education with schools.

OA has seen the HLF as a means to deliver public archaeology at a time when there has been limited avenues to resource non-commercial archaeology, and our partnership with the HLF has become one of the most fruitful endeavours the organisation has embarked upon. To date OA East alone has been involved directly or indirectly in around 40 HLF funded archaeology projects in the East of England and OA North has been involved in a similar number of schemes around the north-west. Indeed, as a result of our successful 20-year partnership with the HLF, the local HLF advisor routinely recommends that other groups who are considering a community archaeology project with the HLF contact us for advice based on our experience.

OA East works both as the lead or a partner on a wide variety of HLF grant funded initiatives. This includes a series of Local Heritage Initiative schemes (a grant scheme no longer running), with projects at Mill Common Huntingdon and Thorney Abbey being particularly significant. OA East has run Your Heritage (now Our Heritage) projects (eg Wisbech Castle and the Hinchingbrooke Iron Age Farm), as well as full HLF Grant projects (eg the Devils Dyke Restoration Project and Jigsaw Cambridgeshire). OA has also set up much smaller projects which have had fantastic results, for example the Thriplow Archaeology Group.

OA North’s specialism in landscape and industrial archaeology has resulted in great partnerships with HLF projects and has seen a succession of landscape survey projects being carried out, for example at Sizergh Castle, Holwick, Windermere Reflections, Ambleside Roman Fort and Vicarage Fields Roman Fort, to name just a few. Many of these have entailed a close partnership with the National Trust and have been centred within the dramatic context of Cumbria and the Lake District. A notable project was the Sizergh Castle community project, which entailed excavations of boundary features and a burnt mound, topographic surveys and a building survey of the Great Barn. The project had a fantastic rapport with the community participants, it featured on a national television programme on the National Trust presented by Michael Buerk, and culminated with the production of a booklet. The work with the HLF has provided opportunities for participation and research which would simply have not happened commercially.

OA’s work with the HLF has been really wide ranging. We helped to train a local archaeology group at Thriplow to use their own geophysical equipment. The group then formed themselves into ArchRheesearch and is still going strong 15 years later, carrying out surveys across Cambridgeshire and helping other local groups survey their sites. OA used an HLF grant to support and develop a living history Iron Age farm which was an educational resource used by OA, Huntingdonshire District Council.
and Cambridgeshire County Council for over 10 years between 1993-2003. We have used HLF grants to survey the entirety of Fulbourn Manor with the local history society and produce medieval educational resources, which schools still use today.

OA and HLF have been able to create a wonderful partnership to achieve something well beyond the sum of its parts. Yes, HLF grants can be a long and laborious effort to obtain the grant but it has been the only means in the past 20 years for us to develop our own public archaeology projects, each having their own special purpose but all contributing to both community and archaeological research. HLF grants have allowed us to build Iron Age roundhouses, introduce local people to archaeology who then go on to form their own active societies, excavate more of the Itter Crescent Roman Villa that we first investigated in 2011 during a housing development, and we have even used it to investigate a long lost elephant house from a lost zoo!

Our involvement with the Heritage Lottery Fund has offered us opportunities which simply would not have been possible through commercial routes, and due to the nature of the schemes has often made us think creatively and benefited all participants, staff and the public alike. Indeed, two recent HLF grants were short-listed for the British Archaeology Award – Best Community Archaeology Project: Wisbech Castle in 2010 and Jigsaw in 2014. We must be doing something right!

Stephen Macaulay and Jamie Quartermaine
Throughout the latter half of 2013, OA North was engaged in a programme of strip, map and record for Birse Civils on behalf of East Riding of Yorkshire County Council on the 3.5km-long Beverley Southern Relief Road. Many of the features uncovered comprised networks of field and enclosure systems, some of which were found to be quite substantial and contained small amounts of pottery in the local Iron Age tradition. One ditch, though, produced a fragment of a blue and colourless glass bangle dating from the 1st to early 2nd century AD.

Post-built structures were identified in at least five locations. Several of these, complete with ring gullies, appear to be the remains of typical domestic roundhouses. Other groups of postholes may be the remains of rectilinear, rather than circular, structures. This activity may be the remains of one, or perhaps a few, short-lived farmsteads that moved around the landscape from generation to generation.

Representing a more long-term investment in the landscape, however, were at least five square barrows and two round barrows. Square barrows are arguably the most characteristic monuments of the Iron Age of East Yorkshire, though the concentration from the Southern Relief Road is low compared with the classic cemeteries on the Yorkshire Wolds. Four of the barrows contained crouched inhumations. There were, however, no obvious grave goods, and sadly no chariots!
In Touch Issue 31

**Huntingdon Town Link Road**

An excavation in advance of the Huntingdon Town link road was carried out by OA East in 2013 for Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council.

The earliest finds were a few prehistoric flint flakes, followed by a little more activity in the Roman period, but the bulk of the evidence belonged to the medieval period. In the 12th-14th centuries, the land was divided into three properties, each of which appears to have a different character. The central area was mainly given over to massive pits, the purpose of which is not clear – they could be tanks for tanning or dyeing – but environmental evidence may be able to shed some light on this. The other two properties also contained pits, but these were much shallower and there was a wide variety of other features, including the remains of floors, ovens, a blacksmith’s hearth, timber buildings (possibly a stable), a cobbled street or yard, and the remains of three skeletons, including a newborn baby and two adults.

As well as large assemblages of pottery, animal bones, and ceramic building material, a variety of other finds were found, including an early post-medieval finger ring, a dagger chape, thimbles, bone pins, toggles and knife handles and evidence for antler working.

The 13-week excavation included a community element. Huntingdon’s Cromwell Museum hosted fortnightly talks about the excavation, and there was a changing exhibition of photographs in Huntingdon Library. We also blogged on the local ‘Shape Your Place’ website, and invited the people of Huntingdon to volunteer for finds processing. Other events associated with the dig were a family archaeology event and a public talk, both held at the library and both very successful.

**Covenham to Boston pipeline, Lincolnshire**

Over the years, Oxford Archaeology has carried out a significant amount of work for utility companies, often involving the investigation of pipeline routes stretching miles across several counties.

Recently, OA East carried out excavations along a 60km pipeline between Covenham St Mary reservoir and Boston, Lincolnshire, for Anglian Water. This involved a major programme of fieldwork, which was completed in 2013. Along with geophysical survey and an extensive fieldwalking survey, a total of 207 evaluation trenches and 27 open area excavations were undertaken.

Much of the archaeology uncovered during the open-area excavations was of late Iron Age to early Roman date, and included evidence for settlements, industrial activity, and salt making. Large assemblages of domestic and industrial waste, including pottery, briquetage and animal bone, were recovered from many of the features, and one pit even contained a near-complete otter skeleton.

Further along the route, ditches and an extensive midden spread or occupation surface dating to the middle and late Bronze Age was excavated at a site on the fen edge near Hagnaby Lock, while four inhumation burials, one of them containing two skeletons, were recorded at Stickney. None of the graves contained any grave goods or other datable material, though a Roman date seemed most likely.

Louise Bush
Oxford Archaeology has been carrying out programmes of archaeological work both large and small for housing schemes in rural and urban settings since its foundation in 1973. With Government targets to generate even more housing stock, OA is doing its bit to help!

**Woolwich Arsenal**

Since 1999, OA has been working intermittently at the Royal Arsenal in Woolwich, which is being transformed in a major urban regeneration scheme. The site occupies an area of 76 acres, includes a conservation area and is a site of national importance in terms of its history, architecture and archaeological remains.

Staff from OA South returned in November 2013 to Woolwich to resume fieldwork for Berkeley Homes. The site is located between the Arsenal and the Woolwich ferry, but it was found to contain features exposed in earlier phases of work undertaken within the Arsenal, most obviously the massive oppidum-like ditch dated to the late Iron Age. The large ditch continued to fill throughout the Roman period (numerous coins have been recovered) and into the medieval period.

By the medieval period, the area saw the construction of wells, latrines and buildings, including a possible house or hall. Tenements and structures representing wharf activity were built in the early post-medieval period, and evidence for later activity relating the Arsenal was identified. Keen to encourage community engagement, Berkeley Homes, the Greenwich Heritage Centre, and OA gave children from a south London primary school the chance to see archaeologists in action.

David Score and Dan Sykes

**Harvest Way, Cambridge**

OA East had the rare opportunity to excavate a part of urban Cambridge between February and June 2014. The site excavated for Ashbury Construction Services is of particular importance, since it is located within the heart of the medieval settlement of Barnwell, and is across the road from Barnwell Priory. Both were later consumed by the town’s expansion to become a suburb of it by the early 19th century.

Initially, it was the post-medieval archaeology that proved to be particularly interesting, with discoveries of glass making waste and pottery probably dating to the early 19th century. A number of the plates were inscribed with personal names, including a plate of Henry Shippey, a cook at St John’s College, Cambridge, between 1813 and 1837. The team also uncovered a 17th-century cobbled surface and associated walls identified as storage for keeping fleeces or barrels, and a brick built cellar. Finds from it included lamps and vast quantities of drinking vessels, including several Belarmin jugs. Digging deeper into the medieval horizons uncovered at least nine medieval plots, including parts of their frontages with post-built structures and clay floors. Their back plots contained masses of intercutting pits, clay-lined tanks, some ovens and 10 wells. Environmental evidence pointed to various processing activities across the settlement, with evidence of fish bones, cereals and insect and crop parasite infestations.

From the start, volunteers were invited to process finds at the OA offices at Bar Hill, and a dedicated team was quickly established. An open day was held in the summer, and visits to local schools were undertaken by OA to talk about the discoveries.

Jemima Woolverton and Stuart Ladd
The National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP) is a major strategy devised by English Heritage that identifies those parts of England’s Heritage that matter to people most and are at greatest risk — and then concentrates efforts on saving them. OA has been lucky enough to win 17 of these projects since the programme’s inception in 2011, their diversity reflecting the huge range of skills and expertise across the company.

A swathe of these projects has looked at the ongoing detrimental effects of arable cultivation on archaeological remains. These culminated in the development of a risk assessment model which has been applied to the majority of scheduled monuments in England at risk from arable. This has enabled scheduled monuments with the greatest need of management changes to be targeted with agri-environment schemes. Similarly, a number of OA’s other NHPP projects have looked at identifying risk at different classes of heritage asset, for example the risk to ports and harbours from changes required by 21st century use and management, the risk to ploughzone archaeology from a lack of systemic recording, and the risk to First World War wireless stations from a lack of awareness of their existence and significance.

Research has also been carried out on specific sites and issues. This has looked at, among others, the distribution and significance of waterlogged deposits in Carlisle, post-excavation work at Rectory Farm, Godmanchester, in Cambridgeshire, the characterisation of Gosport, the threat to Cumbria’s assets from mineral extraction, the threats to the early building fabrics of historic towns, and the ‘Lost Landscapes of the Palaeolithic’. A project with perhaps the greatest significance to the survival and future management of heritage assets is one we are currently undertaking in partnership with Essex County Council. This is assessing the risks to heritage from climate change and how contingency plans can be best formulated to reduce this risk.

Recently, after submitting five proposals in a response to a call for papers looking at how to define heritage assets of national importance (the phrase was included within the new National Planning Policy Framework), four projects were commissioned. These will attempt to define archaeological sites of national importance in city centres, large rural landscapes, wetland landscapes, and lithics scatters using Oxford, Cambridgeshire, East Sussex and the Langdale Axe factories as case studies. The results of these projects will be used to provide possible guidance on a national methodology to define such sites early enough in the planning process. A fifth project proposal to look at sites of national importance within agri-environment schemes has been re-drafted at the request of EH to focus more on the protection of heritage assets in advance of the introduction in 2016 of a new agri-environment scheme, known as ‘New Environmental Land Management Scheme’ (NELMS).

Given that every project is unique with a different methodology and scope needed for each, they are often challenging and have stretched those OA staff members involved. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, they have been both enjoyable and have raised the profile of the company. Perhaps even more importantly, the outcomes of these strategic projects have informed governmental policies, enabling real changes and improvements in heritage conservation and management to be made. It is satisfying to be involved in projects that make a positive contribution to the development of staff, to the company and to the heritage as a whole.

The first round of NHPP will finish at the end of the current financial year, but NHPP 2015-2020 is being developed by an independent advisory board and will be published later this year. We look forward to continuing our work with English Heritage on protecting the national heritage in the future.

Klara S pandl
Occasionally, we are engaged in a project that is utterly different from our usual range of work. In 2013 the OA South’s buildings department was commissioned by English Heritage to record wall art at the former RAF base at Upper Heyford. The art is predominantly located in barrack blocks, having been drawn on the internal walls by American servicemen during their occupation of the base during the Cold War. From the 1980s under ‘Project Warrior’, war art was actively encouraged by the authorities to promote group cohesion and encourage esprit de corps. This is reflected in the war art at Upper Heyford, with many patriotic examples, including squadron emblems and insignia.

Other examples are casual graffiti drawn to alleviate an aspect of service absent from most military history books – boredom. The great variety of images provides an insight into cultural and political life of the era, and demonstrate a very visually-aware generation. There are images of Judge Dredd, Garfield and various Doonesbury characters from American newspapers, as well as impressive artistic murals.

Some examples are more sinister reminders of the very ‘hot’ political climate of the era, including atom bombs and fighter planes. One early 1990s image shows Saddam Hussein in the centre of a target with the words, ‘This is not what I meant when I said I wanted to be in the center of things’.

Jane Phimester

Oxford Archaeology enjoys a long-standing relationship with Historic Royal Palaces. In September 2013, the buildings department at OA South completed an investigation and recording of the Buttery Roofs at Hampton Court Palace while extensive conservation works to restore unsound timbers and roof tiles was being carried out. These are a series of roofs over Apartment 57, located north of the Great Hall, the Great Hall stairs and an adjacent kitchen.

The roofs and their associated buildings are seen as an important structural intersection as they are situated between Archbishop Wolsey’s kitchens and Henry VIII’s Great Hall, as well as being accessible from Base Court and Master Carpenter’s Court. They were subject to a lot of structural changes, creating confusion over whose phase of construction they belong to – Wolsey’s or Henry’s.

The findings of both the archaeological survey and the dendrochronological sampling by Daniel Miles concluded that at least two and possibly more of the roofs were reused structures, truncated to fit their current location, and that one of the roofs was cobbled together from two different reused roof structures. This work is part of a series of ongoing investigations by OA at Hampton Court Palace.

Deirdre Forde

Previous work has included an excavation on Base Court ahead of restoration, recording in Great Hall Court as part of a programme of brickwork repair and replacement, and a watching brief during the conservation of the Anne Boleyn Gatehouse and the palace’s Astronomical Clock.
Reports on individual buildings are being produced and at the end of the project a wider synthesis will be written on the overall village looking at its history and archaeology, its development over time, its buildings, architecture, and constructional techniques.

Jon Gill

When we are called to undertake building recording, it’s usually on a single structure. It can, however, involve recording an entire village. In November 2013, OA South’s buildings department visited the National Trust estate of West Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, to investigate the village’s historic buildings. The National Trust is half-way through a programme to refurbish over 20 of the buildings, principally adding insulation to the roofs but also undertaking internal works such as upgrading services.

The roof works have involved removing the tiles and exposing rafters while the internal works have sometimes included lifting floorboards. This has presented a wonderful opportunity to learn about the archaeology of the buildings as well as the evolution of the village more widely. The work has also been complemented by a separate programme of dendrochronology, which is providing valuable dates for the construction of some of the buildings.

The buildings are largely timber framed, with several having been refronted in brick. The dendrochronology suggests that the older buildings tend to be of 16th century date, although what is thought to be the oldest building, the Church Loft, has been dated to 1464.

Jon Gill

In Touch Issue 31
Oxford Archaeology has one of the longest histories of post-medieval cemetery excavation. We were one of the first archaeological practices to work with an exhumation company in 1992-94 at St Nicholas’ Church, Sevenoaks. This was followed by St Bartholomew’s Church in Penn, Wolverhampton, in 1998, the Royal Naval Hospital, Greenwich, between 1999 and 2001, St Luke’s Church, Islington in 2000, and St George’s Church, Bloomsbury in 2003. In the 1990s the importance of archaeological research on post-medieval assemblages had limited recognition. The removal of burials by exhumation companies was commonplace, while protocols for working on these assemblages were patchy (the detailed protocols formulated for the Spitalfields Project, an excavation undertaken in 1984-86 at Christ Church, Spitalfields, by Jez Reeve, Max Adams, Theya Molleson, and Margaret Cox, were exceptional).

Since then, post-medieval assemblages have gained wide recognition for their high research value, and best practice protocols have been developed. One primary reason why such assemblages are so important is the fact that they often comprise large numbers from which meaningful trends and patterns in burial practice, health, disease, demography and physical attributes can be determined. Yet archaeological excavation and recording of large assemblages is time consuming and so cost is prohibitive.

This summer, the Advisory Panel for Burials in England (APABE) issued a consultation document on sampling large burial grounds. Focusing on strategies for overcoming the practical and economic constraints imposed by the sheer scale of these sites, this guidance is primarily (although not exclusively) aimed at 18th and 19th century burial grounds.

Random selection, or selection based on certain archaeological or osteological criteria, either at the excavation or post-extraction stage of a project, are solutions proposed by the APABE document. It also states that analysing skeletons on site (instead of in a laboratory setting, as is traditionally the case) is not a desirable solution because it limits data capture.

The majority of post-medieval burial projects undertaken by OA have involved on-site osteological analysis. However, this has not been motivated by an attempt to address practical...
the ultimate on-site laboratory set-up. It is a shame that the APABE document does not recognise legalities as a primary factor in addressing issues. The requirement for a guidance document such as this has become critical, because large post-medieval cemeteries are being developed at an increasing rate. Once focused on London, this is becoming more common elsewhere. In the last five or so years, OA has worked on projects in Lancashire (Redearth Primitive Methodist Chapel, Darwen), South Shields (St Hilda’s Church), and Greater Manchester (Swinton Unitarian Free Church). In addition, the size of assemblages are growing, as exemplified by proposals to clear large cemeteries for High Speed 2 and plans for a new link road near Hull – currently employing OA in a consultancy capacity – which will require the removal of a post-medieval cemetery that could contain over 16,000 burials. The need for the development of sampling strategies for large assemblages could not be more keenly felt than it is now.

Louise Loe

Archaeological and exhumation teams working together at St Paul's Church, Hammersmith
A colourful new interpretation scheme, funded by Natural England and designed by OA East, was unveiled at Tilty Abbey in Essex in April 2013. The event marked the culmination of several years’ work by OA East at the abbey site that began with an earthwork, geophysical and wider area survey commissioned by English Heritage in 2010.

Largely based on the material collated during the survey and research undertaken for the analytical report, the interpretation scheme comprises four panels positioned at key points around the site. Each panel details different aspects of the history, archaeology, and environment of the site, illustrated by a number of superb reconstructions (by freelance illustrator and designer Jon Cane) that really help to bring the abbey back to life.

The boards were unveiled to an audience of invited guests that included the owners of the site, members of the Tilty Archaeology and Local History Group (TALHG), representatives from OA East and English Heritage, local residents and two of the skilled craftsmen who were involved in the repair and consolidation of the two sections of standing cloister wall.

Rachel Clarke

The Wellcome Trust Mulberry Tree, Cambridge

OA East was commissioned by the Wellcome Trust to produce a timeline to mark the launch of the new residences building at the Hinxton Genome Campus site near Cambridge. The plaque was to be placed in the new Mulberry Court building.

We have a long-standing relationship with the Wellcome Trust and this is one of several displays OA East has completed for the site. The timeline links our archaeological findings with various significant dates in relation to DNA work and to the Genome Campus itself.

The linear design reflects the evolution of Hinxton from prehistory to important landmark scientific discoveries in modern times. The artwork and design took inspiration from Charles Darwin’s ‘Tree of Life’ concept. He was inspired by a mulberry tree planted in his garden at Down House in Kent. Darwin’s former home was acquired in 1996 by English Heritage with a grant from the Wellcome Trust. His mulberry tree is still there and continues to bear fruit.

Other influences include Van Gogh’s painting, ‘The Mulberry Tree’, with its swirling leaves in contrast to the straighter brushstrokes of the ground and sky. Different textures of leaves were created for the design with little mulberries interspersed throughout the tree. It was fascinating to see the progress of genetic advances against the archaeological evidence at the Hinxton campus – merging science, archaeology and art.

Gillian Greer and Liz Popescu
**Conserving Dover Castle, Kent**

A team from OA South’s Heritage Management Services recently completed a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for English Heritage for what is one of England’s largest castles. From its Roman lighthouse to Cold War government centre, Dover Castle is gloriously iconic throughout all of British history.

We have been at Dover before, with the 2009 Conservation Plan on the Secret Wartime Tunnels, and the 2010 Conservation Statement on the castle’s South-West Quarter. Taking on the entire castle has meant addressing the possible Iron-Age hillfort, the medieval fortifications, the medieval tunnels dug before and after the great French siege of 1216, and the series of Napoleonic and later defences.

The site is much visited and loved, but parts are hard to access and sadly much overgrown, while a few buildings are in a very poor state of repair but have great potential for future use. The CMP is intended to provide a current assessment of significance and future potential, based on the present understanding of the site’s history and archaeology; not least is the fascinating question of the future use of the Constable’s Tower after its hand-over from the Ministry of Defence to English Heritage after 150 years as an official residence. With Chris Catling working on the policy and issues side of the plan, the busy team at OA South was able to concentrate on the description of such a huge and rather daunting site.

**Julian Munby**

**Completing the Extensive Urban Survey, Cambridgeshire**

In April 2014 OA East submitted the final drafts of the updated Extensive Urban Survey reports for Cambridgeshire and were nearing completion of Phase 3 of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Characterisation Project. This is a scheme OA East began in 2009 when it undertook Phase 1 on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. This defined the Historic Environment Character Areas (HECAs), which took the geological, historical and geographical information of the county to divide the landscape into character areas. Phase 2 took the character areas and sub-divided them by analysis of the Historic Environment Record into Historic Environment Character Zones (HECZs).

There are characterisation projects being carried out across the country, all designed to make the Historic Environment Record a better understood and used tool for local planners and people alike. A missing piece in this archaeological jigsaw for Cambridgeshire was the Extensive Urban Survey reports, which were undertaken from1999-2002 but never completed. Phase 3 of the characterisation project was therefore to update and complete these reports to finalise the map of the county. A total of 29 urban areas were reported on (hundreds of HER records studied and analysed), with the production of 12 new strategy reports (incorporating the local and regional research frameworks) for the most significant urban areas (eg the historic town of Ely). The city of Cambridge itself is not included in this survey and comes under its own separate project.

**Stephen Macaulay**
The study of Britain’s industrial past is adding an increasingly important dimension to archaeology, mirroring a growing and widespread interest in industrial heritage. Industrial archaeology is an area in which Oxford Archaeology has developed considerable expertise over the past 25 years or so. And, as perhaps may be anticipated from its geographical location in the historic industrial heartland of north-west England, OA North is widely acknowledged to be at the forefront of this comparatively new discipline.

The archetypal historic building in the North West is almost certainly the textile mill, which dominated swathes of the Lancashire landscape from the late 18th century onwards. Britain’s textile industry largely collapsed by the 1960s, and a significant proportion of the mills have since been altered radically or demolished altogether, frequently without any form of permanent record. Since 2008, in recognition of the rapidly dwindling number of surviving sites, OA North has been leading a strategic county-wide assessment and survey of Lancashire textile mills on behalf of English Heritage. This has enabled a better understanding of the county’s rich and internationally significant textile-manufacturing heritage to be gained, and will ultimately inform a strategy to secure the long-term future of the most important surviving mill complexes. During the course of the project to date, several Lancashire mills have been put forward successfully for statutory designation as listed buildings, including Queen Street Mill in Burnley, and Homes Mill in Clitheroe. OA North has also provided specialist services to a variety of other clients working on designated textile mills, including Helmshore Mill in Rossendale, Victoria Mill in Burnley’s Weavers’ Triangle, and Kirk Mill in Chipping. A recent addition to our extensive portfolio was Quarry Bank Mill in Cheshire. This impressive and hugely significant mill complex is owned by the National Trust, which commissioned OA North to carry out detailed historical research and a comprehensive survey of the component buildings.

OA North’s expertise of textile mills is by no means limited to standing buildings, and a specialist team is dedicated to excavating the sites of demolished historic mills. Most recently these have included the site of Richard Arkwright’s Shudehill Mill in Manchester, one of the earliest cotton factories in the town, where ground-
breaking experimentation with steam power was pioneered in the early 1780s. Excavation has revealed well-preserved remains of a series of power systems that were installed in the mill between 1782 and 1818, including steam engines and boilers that were supplied by the famous firm of Boulton and Watt.

The industrial townscapes of the 19th century comprised a plethora of new building types in addition to textile mills, providing an important archaeological resource that is beginning to be explored in depth. In Manchester, for instance, OA North has recently excavated the fascinating remains of churches, inns and pubs, public wash-houses, engineering works and foundries, bleach works, dyeing and textile-printing works, glassworks, chemical works and collieries, together with numerous different types of workers’ housing. Excavations carried out since 2009 in the immediate vicinity of Shudehill Mill, for example, have exposed the remains of more than 80 workers’ houses, including back-to-back and cellar dwellings and some of the atrocious enclosed court properties described by Friedrich Engels in the 1840s. OA North’s excavation of other examples of workers’ houses, particularly in the University Quarter of the city, has enabled comparative analysis to be undertaken and has provided a fresh insight into the evolution of houses for the new industrial workers of the late 18th and 19th centuries.

Meanwhile, OA South has been investigating key sites in South Wales, another of Britain’s historic industrial regions. Recent excavation at a former industrial works at Rogerstone, near Newport, revealed successive phases of use. Modern concrete that covered the majority of the site belonged to the recently demolished Novelis aluminium works, while rectangular brick structures below the concrete were the bases for boilers associated with the Northern Aluminium Company works active during WWII. Prior to aluminium, the works were involved in the manufacture of iron horseshoe nails, and a row of furnaces was associated with tinplate manufacture. Earlier investigations of the historic industry of Wales include the excavation of the Upper Bank copper and zinc works on the east bank of the river Tawe near Swansea.

Ian Miller
OUR PUBLICATIONS 2013-14
What others have said about our publications in 2013/14

‘Superbly illustrated, the book is extremely good value and will have lasting relevance for comparative research in Viking studies.’
Mark Redknap in British Archaeology. Publication: Shadows in the Sand: Excavation of a Viking-age cemetery at Cumwhitton

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Rob Ixer in British Archaeology. Publication: London Gateway: Iron Age and Roman salt making in the Thames Estuary

‘If you wish to learn more about Cumbrian archaeology, upland archaeology generally, or the ways in which surveys such as this are essential to effective landscape management, then you should buy, and read, this book.’
Paul Frodsham in Antiquity. Publication: Cairns, Fields, and Cultivation. Archaeological landscapes of the Lake District uplands

‘Richly illustrated throughout, this volume will continue to provide landscape researchers with a rich pickings for many decades to come.’
Andy Wigley in Landscape History. Publication: Yarnton. Iron Age and Romano-British settlement and landscape

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In Touch Issue 31