Issue 5

# Dredged Up from the past

Autumn 2009

Archaeology Finds Reporting Service Newsletter

## Protocol Update

Welcome to issue five of Dredged Up, the popular newsletter of the BMAPA/EH Protocol Implementation Service.

*Wessex Archaeology's Gemma Ingason talking to staff at Brett's Cliffe Wharf during a Protocol Awareness visit*

The Implementation Service is now in its fourth successful year and wharves and vessels around the country continue to report archaeological finds that have been retrieved from deep below the waves during the course of aggregate dredging.

There have been an incredible range of finds discovered since the last issue of Dredged Up and new reports are regularly uploaded. Some of the latest finds are explored on page 2 of this issue.

If you have any questions about finds, finds reporting or the Protocol you can now contact your Wessex Archaeology team by emailing: protocol@wessexarch.co.uk. We are happy to advise on all finds and finds reporting issues, and answer any questions that you have about the Protocol.

### News

The BMAPA/EH Protocol is the first of its kind in this country providing mitigation for the discovery of archaeological material during the course of marine aggregate extraction. In response to its success, other marine industries have begun to use the Protocol as a template for good practice during marine work. This demonstrates just how effective and useful the scheme is, which is entirely due to the hard work and dedication of aggregate industry staff.

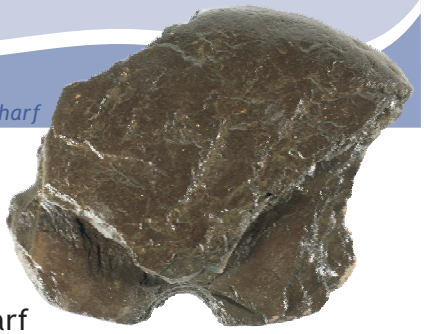
*Staff at UMD's Shoreham Wharf learn about our heritage*

**The Awareness Programme which supports the Protocol has produced a new series of handouts for wharves and vessels which give advice on the reporting and treatment of finds. These can be viewed online at**

**http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/marine/bmapa/docs.html**

**Copies are being distributed during Awareness visits. To book an Awareness visit contact Gemma Ingason at Wessex Archaeology**

**+44 (0)1722 326 867**
**protocol@wessexarch.co.uk**



*Shale artefact found by Sibby at Kendall's Shoreham Wharf*

0 5 cm

# Finds from 2008/2009

Since the last issue of Dredged Up a further 88 individual finds have been recognised, retrieved and reported by industry staff.

The majority of finds have been made of metal and have varied from ships' fittings to pocket watches. One of the most enigmatic metal finds from the past six months was the top of a flagpole dredged from Area 319, which was discovered at CEMEX's Northfleet Wharf by R. Burnham.

*Flagpole finial found by Roger Burnham at CEMEX's Northfleet Wharf*

0 1 2 cm

Two new ceramic finds have been reported including a relish pot depicting a scene from the Napoleonic battle of la Albuera, which was fought on the 16th May 1811. This pot dates from the late 19th century and was found in several pieces at CEMEX's Portslade Wharf by Andy Roberts and Michael Pettitt. The pot sherds, which were dredged from Area 137, were only recovered thanks to the dedication and enthusiasm of staff at the wharf.

Sibby working at Kendall's Shoreham Wharf discovered, amongst other artefacts dredged from Area 351, a large piece of worked shale. This is a very rare find and experts believe that it could date from the Romano-British period, nearly 2000 years ago. Its exact function remains unknown, although a number of suggestions have been considered, varying from an ancient chopping board for food, to ballast onboard a vessel.

Recognising stone finds amongst aggregate is understandably difficult but incredibly John Quayle working on the *Arco Avon* discovered and reported what is thought to be a stone bead which measures only 1cm diameter. It was found amongst cargo from Area 127.

*Stone bead discovered by John Quayle on board HAML's Arco Avon*

The quantity and quality of reported finds demonstrates the hard work, care and attention shown by aggregate industry staff and we'd like to thank you for your continued enthusiasm.

*Late 19th century relish pot found by Andy Roberts and Michael Pettitt at Cemex's Portslade Wharf*

0 5 cm

*WWII Hawker Hurricane tail wheel strut from Area 474 discovered by A. Godwin & S. Engley at HAML's Denton Wharf*

# Mystery on the seabed

On 28th February 2009 the *Arco Avon* was working in Area 474, approximately 36km south east of Beachy Head, when the dredging gear impacted an obstruction on the seabed. This is very uncommon within dredging areas as extensive surveys are conducted prior to the granting of the licence to dredge in order to locate and identify possible obstructions. The aim of this is not only to protect ships and dredging gear, but also to protect submerged archaeology such as shipwrecks or aircraft on the seabed.

Staff on board the *Arco Avon* reported the incident and the presence of the obstruction was reported to Wessex Archaeology as the Protocol encompasses discoveries made on the seabed as well as those made on board vessels and at wharves.

Geophysical surveys conducted within Area 474 located several anomalies, though the closest to the site of the impact was over 800m away. Whilst it is possible for objects and archaeology to move across the seafloor (due to strong currents, fishing or other seabed activities) it is unlikely that something big enough to impact a drag head could be moved by these processes.


No archaeological material was reported by the *Avon* from the vicinity of the obstruction. In fact only one find has been reported from Area 474 in the four years of the Protocol – a Hawker Hurricane tail wheel strut dredged earlier this year and featured in Dredged Up issue four.

The exact nature of the obstruction has not yet been determined. The potential exists for the anomaly to represent an unknown wreck but this seems unlikely as aircraft and shipwrecks would be expected to yield significant finds that the *Avon* would have picked up with the cargo.

The obstruction is currently thought to be a boulder deposited in this location by ice during a past ice age. A 50m exclusion zone has been established around it for the protection of ships working in the area and the protection of the presently unidentified anomaly. The exclusion zone and the nature of the obstruction will be reviewed during all further monitoring surveys in this area.

*The Arco Avon Hanson Aggregates Marine Limited*

*Handaxe discovered by Jan Meeulmeister (HAML)*

# Protocol finds - a journey through time

Since the introduction of the Protocol in 2005, hundreds of artefacts and ecofacts have been reported, all of which inform our understanding of the marine historic environment.

The finds of greatest use to archaeologists are those which can be dated. Some finds contain enough information that their manufacture can be assigned to a specific year. An example of this is provided by the telescope discovered by P. Stevens at Kendalls Wharf inscribed with the date 1944. Other finds may be assigned a broad date range. For example, whilst it is not feasible to date every mammoth tooth, the archaeological record suggests that mammoth remains occur between approximately 130,000 and 10,000 years ago.

The majority of datable reported finds come from the earliest prehistoric periods or from the most recent periods. Datable finds, such as pottery, that come from the time in between - the Neolithic to the medieval period - can be incredibly fragile. The finds that do survive are very robust, like the Roman finds shown here. Any finds that date from the Neolithic to the medieval period would be incredibly important so keep your eyes peeled!

*1 Jo O'Brien (UMD)*
*2 N. Coombs (CEMEX)*
*3 Henk Strijdonk (HAML)*
*4-5 A. Mills (HAML)*
*6 A. Mills (HAML)*
*7 Brett Farmer (HAML)*
*8 Steenkorrel Wharf staff (CEMEX)*

*1 Mammoth humerus*

*2 Mammoth tusk*

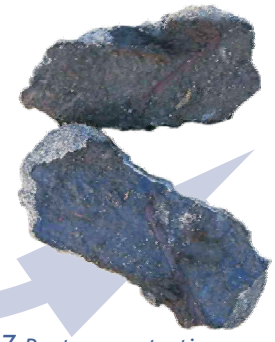
*5 Flint*

*6 Mammoth tooth*

*8 Struck flint*

*3 De-laminated mammoth tusk*

*4 Mammoth tooth*



*7 Peat concentrations*

| Palaeolithic | Mesolithic | Neolithic | Bronze Age | Iron Age |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 700,000-10,500 BP | 8,500-4,000 BC | 4,000-2,400 BC | 2,400-700 BC | 700 BC-43 AD |


Ship's telegraph plate discovered by D. Whitby (CEMEX)

The timeline below illustrates how finds reported through the Protocol relate to the broad expanse of time from our ancestral predecessors to the modern day.

16 Ship's timber and clinch bolt

9* Worked shale

15 Pottery

17 German signal light

14 Ship's wooden sheave

18 Vis or Radom pistol

11* Samian ware pottery

10* Samian ware pottery

13 Royal mortar shell

19 WW2 aircraft part


20 Employment badge

12 Cannonball

21 Knife

9 Sibby (Kendalls)
10-11 T. Kerrison and K. Myscin (HAML)
12 Dave Davies (CEMEX)
13 Alan Hook (Britannia)
14 Henk Strijdonk (HAML)
15 N.C. Sait (UMD)
16 Daniel Kelliher (CEMEX)
17 J. Jerromes (HAML)
18 Paul Tallents (UMD)
19 Barry Gould (UMD)
20 Bedhampton Wharf staff (UMD)
21 N.C. Sait (UMD)

| Rare finds * Romano-British | Anglo-Saxon | Medieval | Post-medieval | Modern |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43-410 AD | 410-1066 AD | 1066-1500 AD | 1500-1800 AD | 1800-Present day |

## Who owns reported finds?

Finds from wrecks remain the property of the original owner under laws introduced to prevent people profiting from the practice of deliberately wrecking vessels. The Receiver of Wreck (RoW) is informed of every BMAPA Protocol find that may have originated from a vessel or aircraft. The RoW will, where possible, try to locate the original owner to arrange the return of the item. The Cavendish badge discovered by CEMEX (page 7) was returned to its owner when it was handed to the Royal Navy for display in their museum at Portsmouth.


*Alison Kentuck (RoW) overseeing the unloading of a cargo of copper ingots. Photograph courtesy of the MCA.*

Where no owner can be traced within one year of the discovery of an object, the item becomes property of the Crown but will normally be given to the dredging company that discovered it. The RoW will advise in every individual circumstance.

Finds that are not from wreck (such as those from the Palaeolithic period which predates the use of vessels) will normally remain the property of the company that discovered them. Some companies choose to display them at the wharf, or donate them to local museums or schools. Wessex Archaeology will advise the finder on the ownership of every find.

## Protocol finds on tour

Many of the finds reported through the Protocol have been donated to Wessex Archaeology to use for teaching purposes. This is fantastic as marine archaeology is by its very nature highly inaccessible and many people might never have the chance to explore real finds that have come from under the sea. These finds are also used at wharves and on vessels during Protocol Awareness visits.

*BMAPA/EH Protocol finds being used as part of Wessex Archaeology's outreach programme Time Travelling by Water*

Dredged finds are regularly used in schools where children are asked to identify what has been found, which is not always as easy as it sounds! They are also taken to event days. As many of the finds discovered and reported through the Protocol need to be kept submerged in clean water, we display these in a water table with a gravel base. This both enables the public to handle the finds and, to a degree, recreates the context from which the artefacts were discovered.

If you have any finds that you would like to donate to Wessex Archaeology, please contact:
**protocol@wessexarch.co.uk**

*Cavendish badge found at Cemex's Dover Wharf by Richard Cork*

## Finds updates

In the last issue of Dredged Up we reported the discovery of a ship's badge bearing the name *Cavendish*. Initially it was thought to be unique – the only screen badge created for this 1944 destroyer during the metal rationing years of World War Two. However in February this year Brett's Cliffe Wharf discovered another badge bearing the name *Cavendish*. The second badge is the same size and design as the first one, found at CEMEX's Dover Wharf, which is now safely in the vaults of Portsmouth's Royal Naval Museum. This leaves us with a question: why are there two identical badges?

*Cavendish badge found at Brett's Cliffe Wharf by John Snazle, Ashley Wilkinson, Derek Payne and Tony Payne*

Commemorative badges were made for high-ranking personnel serving on board vessels and for civic dignitaries connected with the vessel. They were also sometimes minted for towns who adopted ships during warship week in 1942. The *Cavendish* was adopted by Kendal in Cumbria following the sinking of a previously adopted ship in 1943, however town history experts in Kendal do not recall owning a badge.

Another theory is that one of the badges was created for the ship after its refit in 1956. Prior to this the *Cavendish* was in dock in Plymouth where the ship sustained 'malicious damage'. It is possible then that the original badge was removed at this time and a second made, accounting for the two badges discovered.

Recently it has come to light that the lifeboats of Royal Naval vessels also carried the badge of the ship they were attached to. Wessex Archaeology is currently investigating the possibility that one or both of the badges may have originated on the lifeboats of the *Cavendish*.

## Area 240

*Wessex Archaeology staff deploying geophysical survey equipment to investigate Area 240*

Following the reporting of significant Palaeolithic remains from Area 240 in the east coast dredging region by Hanson Aggregates Marine Limited (featured in Dredged Up issue 4), Wessex Archaeology continue to work on an extensive project in part of this licence area to locate and inform upon any areas of archaeological sensitivity. As part of this project, Wessex Archaeology has completed a month long geophysical survey and recently took samples of material from the seabed. The results of these surveys, which are designed to help inform future dredging licence applications, will be available on our website soon.

*Geophysicist Stephanie Arnott monitoring the ALSF funded survey*

Wessex Archaeology

BMAPA

ENGLISH HERITAGE

# First Aid for finds recovered during aggregate dredging

In this issue of Dredged Up, archaeological conservator Angela Karsten, who works at Fort Cumberland alongside English Heritage's Maritime Team, tells us how to protect dredged finds and why this is important.

First aid measures aim to prevent or minimise damage to finds using the minimum amount of intervention. This is crucial as marine finds can be damaged by physical, chemical or biological deterioration and following correct first aid measures can greatly reduce these effects.

First aid should be carried out as soon as possible after a find is discovered, either by the finder or by the Site Champion.

All archaeological objects are sensitive to changes in environmental conditions. At sea artefacts reach equilibrium with their surrounding environment however, when a find is dredged this environment is changed rapidly and deterioration begins. Uncontrolled drying of wet finds and infestation with mould can lead to the total loss of archaeological evidence.

Some effects of drying are dramatic as finds from a marine environment can be heavily impregnated with salts. When dried in the wrong conditions these salts can 'burst' out causing irreparable damage. First aid for finds follows three rules:

**KEEP IT WET**
**KEEP IT DARK**
**KEEP IT COOL**

*A Mary Rose Trust experiment demonstrates damage to cannonballs caused by improper conservation*

Artefacts should be submerged in freshwater or seawater in a clean container, ideally with a close fitting lid, to stop water evaporating and debris falling in. Alternatively, float a sheet of plastic or tarpaulin on the surface of the water. If the object is too big for a container, wrap it in wet fabric and then in plastic or tarpaulin to prevent it from drying out. Do not wrap finds in tissue paper as it will disintegrate when wet. Care should be taken when handling wet artefacts: they often look more robust than they are.

Checking the find regularly and topping up or changing the water is essential to maintain the stability of the artefacts. If mould or algae develop both the find and the container should be rinsed under running water and then the find should be re-submerged in fresh water.

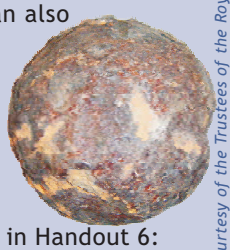
If an artefact has completely or partially dried out when it is discovered, it should be kept dry – when a find has begun drying out re-submerging it can rapidly destroy it.

Reporting dredged finds makes an excellent contribution to our understanding of the past and ensures that finds can be studied and enjoyed by the wider public.

## Further Advice

If you have any concerns or questions regarding finds in your care contact a conservator or your local Finds Liaison Officer. You can also contact Wessex Archaeology:

+44 (0)1722 326 867
protocol@wessexarch.co.uk



*Courtesy of the Trustees of the Royal Armouries*

Further information can be found in Handout 6: Conservation and Storage. If you have not had an Awareness visit recently and do not have the updated handouts please contact Wessex Archaeology.