

# ARCHAEOLOGY ON THE WEB

July 29, 2011 Tom Goskar Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Digital Archaeology, Industrial Academia, Amesbury Archer, Anthropology, Archaeological sub-disciplines, Archaeological theory, Archaeology, Centre for Audio-Visual Study and Practice, Community Archaeology, Cultural heritage, e-books, industrial site, iPads, London, Museology, page site, Practice in Archaeology, smartphones, Syro-Palestinian archaeology, the Guardian, Tom Goskar, Twitter, United Kingdom, web content, web manager, web services, Wessex Archeology

My name is Tom Goskar, and I am [Wessex Archaeology](#)'s web manager. I am also one of the team behind the Day of Archaeology, an international online event which has taken months in the planning.

Like the rest of the Day of Archaeology team, my day has been an incredibly busy one. Essentially it began in earnest yesterday evening (if that's not cheating) putting the final touches to the DoA website, through to seeing the first post from the Guardian's [Maev Kennedy](#) go online.

After some sleep, I have been helping to keep the website well-oiled and ticking along. I have been doing this whilst publishing and planning web content for Wessex Archeology, who have helped to support the Day of Archaeology by providing some of my time during the day to help run it. Today, I have published some updates about a large excavation that is happening in the [heart of Dorchester](#), the Roman town of Durnovaria. I've also been following back people who have recently started following [Wessex on Twitter](#), planning some future web content for an industrial site that we are working on in the north of England, and looking at ideas for publishing some of our content as e-books (in EPUB format) and how we might fit that into our existing design workflows. There are some promising tools out there, and it's exciting to think of the possibilities of publishing content that will look good on devices from smartphones to Kindles, iPads, etc. Especially when you have a back-catalogue of titles which are now out of print. We could give some publications a new lease of life. Specialist books which when printed are only ever available to a small number of people could have global distribution and benefit many more. Keep your eyes on the [Wessex Archaeology](#) website, there's lots of exciting things planned for the future.

Today I have also just finished an article for a forthcoming publication based upon a talk I gave earlier this year as part the [Centre for Audio-Visual Study and Practice in Archaeology](#) (CASPAR) "Archaeologists & the Digital: Towards Strategies of Engagement" workshop in May 2011 at UCL in London. My paper is called Wessex Archaeology and the Web, a simple title, but one that explores how the organisation's website has grown from a small nine page brochure-style website in 2001 to the socially connected 4000+ page site that it is today. Major archaeological discoveries, such as the [Amesbury Archer](#) and the [Boscombe Bowmen](#) amongst others were catalysts to expand and change the way we published information online. We've been earlier adopters of many "Web 2.0" (despite my hating that term) technologies and web services, as well as starting the first archaeology podcast, [Archaeocast](#). Many other heritage organisations have looked to us for trying things out first, so we have been in the spotlight on many occasions. It's been some journey since I relaunched the website in May 2002, and it still feels like this is just the beginning.

My philosophy has always been that archaeology is all about people; as archaeologists we have a duty to make our work available to as many people as possible, otherwise there is little point in what we do. We run the risk of becoming irrelevant to society if we do not broaden access to the information that we uncover. The web is instrumental to helping us to help people learn about their pasts, and the Day of Archaeology is a fantastic way of showing the sheer diversity of work that goes on inside archaeology, and how exciting and relevant it all is.

It has been wonderful to, throughout the day, read many of the posts as they have been published. It makes me excited to see so much happening in the world (literally – see the [map of posts!](#)) of archaeology, and that so many people have been passionate enough about their subject to tell the world about it through the Day of Archaeology website. I do hope that it inspires more archaeologists to shout about their work (we're often quite shy) and see the benefits of the web, and that it inspires readers of this site to follow up the projects that they see here. Maybe some will be moved to take up archaeology in some way, maybe as a volunteer, joining a local dig, or even thinking about archaeology as a profession.

So, a big thank you to all who have contributed an entry to the Day of Archaeology so far, and to fellow organisers Lorna, Matt, Dan, Jess, Stu, and Andy. And thank you, dear reader, for supporting us by visiting and reading all about a day in the life of what is now 422 archaeologists.

It's been a fun journey, and fingers crossed, there will be a Day of Archaeology 2012!