Archaeology Data Service ONLINE

ISSN 1368-0560   Issue 8 (Autumn 2000)

ADS **ONLINE**, the Internet version of ADS **NEWS**, contains articles and pictures which do not appear in the printed version. Articles that are expanded from the print version are identified with a green icon , articles which appear *only* in ADS **ONLINE** are marked with a blue icon , and articles which are the same in the two versions (but with the addition of hotlinks in the online version) are marked with a red icon .

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ADS ONLINE

Convergence

"... there needs to be a sea-change in the way institutions plan and provide for the information needs of those working within them. Information is now available in many different media, and in all manner of locations ... This has profound and far reaching implications ..." (The Follett Report, December 1993, www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/papers/follett/report/)

It is, of course, a cliché that we live in exciting times. While the hype of 'post-Gutenberg publishing' wears thin, the speed of change can hardly be denied. Reporting in 1993, the Follett Report was one of many reviews that established an agenda to harness the opportunities afforded by new technology. Not only have many of its proposals been implemented – and many of the hopes surpassed – some of its "blue sky" aspirations are now taken for graed.

The Follett Report recognised that, if the nature of publication was changing, then library collections would also need to change. Not only would libraries be transformed, but technology afforded new opportunities to enhance the accessibility and use of seldom used, and sometimes little known holdings. Since then, numerous projects have been making that vision a reality for higher education. The museum sector has been quick to respond to these opportunities too, demonstrating an impressive commitment to harnessing these opportunities and reaching new audiences. Long-established boundaries are blurring, facilitiated in part by these new technologies. The result is an unfolding fusion of services: libraries, archives, museums, internet services, researchers and students are closer now than at any time in the past.

The foundation of the Arts and Humanities Data Service was part of this process. Other initiatives like e-Lib, the Resource Discovery Network and the Research Support Libraries Project (RSLP) have been working to a similar goal. Partnerships and collaborations have yielded significant results, making possible the sort of sea change which Follett envisaged, and which have been of particular benefit to archaeology. For example, in the last issue of ADS NEWS, we reported the launch of the ADS digital library, while previous editions reported the success of BIAB. These two are conventional types of resources that might be found on paper in any conventional library. More can still be achieved. In this issue, we take a look at other library developments, in particular, three projects that are working to enhance access to conventional research materials for archaeologists. Librarians, local and national heritage agencies and academics are all active in implementing these projects, and will benefit from them. Collaboration like this is the norm rather than the exception, Could it be that the Internet has connected us in ways that were not foreseen seven years ago?

William Kilbride
email

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ArchSearch Latest

The ADS traditionally winds down during the summer as various members of its staff return to their roots and take up a mattock or trowel in earnest on various research projects. Nonetheless, datasets from a small but exciting group of British Academy-funded projects have been made available through ArchSearch (below). Also, as one of a number of themed collections, the 'Archaeology Dating Service' was launched (below). Another recent and very exciting development is the provision of a basic map-based search capability to our users.

A number of projects are at an advanced stage and will be released in the near future including

- The OASIS project which is upgrading the NMR Excavation Index for England,
- upgrades to the Eynsham and Royal Opera House digital archies,
- Cottam digital excavation archive from a project funded by the British Academy

Staff have also spent the last few months exploring the problems of archiving for geophysical data, in collaboration with West Yorkshire Archaeology Service. This pilot project, using three different data sets from three different interventions, is helping to clarify advice and develop practical expertise in the archiving of data sets which lose much of their functionality once consigned to paper. Geophysical data presents particular problems because, unlike many other formats, geophysical data are almost unique to archaeology, so there is no received wisdom for handling the data. Moreover, the large number of data files produced make documentation particularly important if the data is to be re-assembled.

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British Academy Projects

A diverse range of datasets and digital archives has been made available during the last few months, from a project looking at the bioarchaeology of a mesolithic shell midden at Culverwell in Dorset to the micromorphological examination of soils and sediments from a terraced slope at the Early Bronze Age site of Markiani on the Aegean island of Amorgos. A very useful bibliographic database of important recent work in Spain on pottery and of Iberian pottery found in the British Isles has also been made available through the bibliographic section of the ADS Library.

Funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Board has allowed the ADS to facilitate these deposits. We will of course endeavour to offer every assistance to other grant holders preparing digital archives for deposition. Please contact us.

Tony Austin, Jo Clarke and Keith Westcott
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Map based search

The spatial aspects of archaeological data inform, some would say even dictate, archaeological interpretation. Perhaps the most exciting development at the ADS of late is the provision of a map-based interface to the index of archaeological sites and events in ArchSearch. Currently the only map-based tool consists of a simple form that allows the user to define a geographic area though its south-west and north-east corners. Users can define search areas in Ireland using the Ordnance Survey Ireland (OSI) map references scheme or in mainland Britain using the equivalent Ordnance Survey (OS).

This provision of a simple web-enabled Geographic Information System (GIS) is the first step in a planned programme of geo-spatial developments. A "clickable" map interface will be available in the very near future. Integration with chronological search tools is also a goal.

Tony Austin, Jo Clarke and Keith Westcott
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Archaeology *Dating* Service

Visitors to ArchSearch will be aware that navigation has been rationalised and improved with options selected from dropdown lists that are revealed by clicking generic buttons on the left of the main menu area. One of these groupings, 'Special Collections' provides access to a number of themed groups. The first of these themes to be made available is concerned with 'dating' and has been dubbed the Archaeology Dating Service. A number of resources deposited by the research community are available as searchable databases, including the Council for British Archaeology's Archaeological Site Index to Radiocarbon Dates from Great Britain and Ireland, the Vernacular Architecture Group's Dendrochronology Database and a database of radiocarbon dates from an AHRB-funded study, Spatial and Chronological Patterns in the Neolithisation of Europe. Links are also provided to quality resources elsewhere such as those held by Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory and the Canadian Archaeological Radiocarbon database.

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Learning the Lingo

We are delighted to welcome Kate Fernie from the beginning of October, on a year's secondment from the English Heritage National Monuments Record. Kate will be working particularly on the PATOIS project, and Guides to Good Practice series. Kate did a first degree in Archaeology & Anthropology at Cambridge University, and later a postgraduate qualification in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester. She joined the RCHME initially to work in the Air Photography Unit, becoming SMR Liaision Officer for the NMR in 1996. In this short article, Kate introduces "PATOIS", a project that we hope will be around for a long tie.

Funded from the education budget, the ADS has a pressing concern with teaching and learning. The higher education sector is well provisioned with computing infrastructure and is increasingly looking at ways to manage digital data to make it accessible as well as available. The recent introduction of further education into the remit of Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has made this need all the more pressing, bringing much of the post-16 education sector into the ADS's user community. The publication of Guides to Good Practice was an early step in providing that sort of user support. The appointment of a User Services Manager at the start of September last year – a member of staff specifically charged with developing teaching and training – has facilitated stronger contacts with staff and students in numerous universities. Most recently, the ADS has secured funding from JISC to develop specific teaching materials for use in the classroom - or the home.

The Publication and Archive Teaching with Online Information Systems project (PATOIS) will free staff time to develop a set of online collaborative teaching packs that are based on existing digital collections. These tutorials, which may be used collectively or individually, will cover the full range of primary electronic data sets encountered by students following undergraduate courses, with emphases on site excavation and survey archives, national and local monuments records, archaeological publications, and desk-based interdisciplinary materials. Once established, the tutorial packs can be continuously maintained, edited and expanded as a routine activity of existing staff. Moreover, close relationships with different institutions should allow for the tutorials to be tailored and repackaged for the specific needs of their own curricula. The tutorials should also encourage students to engage in open-ended learning, visiting and interrogating the data over and over again in different ways, exploring the numerous strengths, weaknesses and contradictions of archaeological data, interpretation and method.

Several academic departments have offered to test and review the packs, while various organisations, such as the Natural History Museum, the Learning and Teaching Support Network and the English Heritage National Monuments Record have all agreed to participate, providing practical advice with content and presentation. It is hoped that this sort of collaboration will enhance and extend students' knowledge of archaeological data, and why different organisations and individuals use it for different purposes. Moreover, given the institutional support that the ADS can provide, the tutorials can be maintained, expanded and updated as new projects or data or needs arise. Thus, PATOIS will not only create a useful set of teaching materials, but will provide a working environment for students interested in archaeology.

Kate Fernie
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An Overview of the Research Support Libraries Programme

The Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) is a £30m UK-wide initiative funded by the four UK higher education (HE) funding bodies. Its origins lie in the Follett Review (1993) and in the associated Anderson Report (1996). The Programme brings together both traditional and new forms of access to library and archive information, with specific reference to support for research. The overarching vision of the Programme is to facilitate the best possible arrangements for research support in UK libraries. The Programme is 'managed', and it attempts to take a holistic view of library and archive activity throughout the UK.

In very general terms, two of the principal activities which the Programme is funding, or part-funding, are collaborative collection management projects (in any discipline), such as ARCHway, or projects that provide support for humanities and social science collections by improving information about, and access to, materials through retrospective conversion, improved indexing, cataloguing and conservation. The Cambridge Air Photography Library's digital internet catalogue project and OASIS are good examples of such activities. In practice, most of the projects are consortial and contain a number of elements of different types of work. Cross-sectoral work is strongly encouraged. At the time of writing, funding totalling £11.25m has been made available for sixty projects, as well as a number of studies. Three projects are being co-funded with the British Library's Cooperation and Partnership Programme, and one with the Scottish Cultural Resources Area Network (SCRAN). A further £15m is being made available over 3 years to a total of 48 HE libraries under the Programme's Access strand.

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Further information relating to the background to the Research Support Libraries Programme, its aims, history and projects may be found on the programme website at http://www.rslp.ac.uk/

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OASIS: Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations

Since January 2000 the OASIS Project has been creating a concordance between the NMR Excavation Index for England (EI) and the Archaeological Investigations Project (AIP) and making the results available for consultation via ArchSearch, the ADS Catalogue. The completed record for 1990-1993 has already been forwarded and that for 1994 will follow shortly. By January 2001 records for the period 1990-1998 (in excess of 20,000) will be available. As part of the project the available EI fields on ArchSearch have also been expanded, notably to include descriptive text and bibliographic sources, greatly enhancing the value of the resource to users.

Aside from the ongoing concordance and dissemination of the completed fieldwork projects, OASIS is developing an on-line reporting form which will allow the future updating of the national record to a far greater currency than previously achievable. It is intended that forms submitted as part of the project will be checked and verified in the NMR before being passed to ArchSearch through the existing channels.

The traditional strengths of both the EI and AIP records have contributed to a degree of coverage of English archaeological fieldwork never before made available in easily accessible digital form, and it is hoped that higher education in particular, with its generous sponsorship of the project, will go on to reap the benefits.

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ARCHway - gateway to resource sharing in archaeology

Archaeologists and librarians will be working together over the next two years to improve access for researchers to archaeology journals in the UK. The ARCHway Project, which is funded by the RSLP and managed by the J.B.Morrell Library at the University of York, involves eighteen university libraries as full partners as well as other key partners such as the ADS, the British Library and the British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography.

The project will look at whether it is feasible to develop a comprehensive listing of archaeology journals held by the partner libraries and in other important archaeology research collections and whether such a list could be mounted on the World Wide Web. It will also investigate ways in which access to journals might be enhanced through collaborative collection management schemes.

Another strand of the project will investigate Table of Contents services and document delivery services. The aim here will be to make the link from journal title to journal article and the delivery of that article as efficient as possible.

The key to the success of the project will be the extent to which the outcomes meet the needs of archaeology researchers. A key part of the study will therefore involve the distribution of a short questionnaire to archaeology staff in each of the eighteen partner universities. The findings from the questionnaire will form the basis for discussions in focus groups and in individual meetings between archaeology researchers and the project team.

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To find out more about ARCHway, have a look at the website at http://www.york.ac.uk/archway

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A digital Internet catalogue for the University of Cambridge Air Photograph Library

The Cambridge University Committee for Aerial Photography (CUCAP) has a considerable library of aerial photographs, covering much of the United Kingdom and many parts of western Europe. Spanning almost sixty years of active reconnaissance, the images within the library have been a fundamental tool in archaeological research for much of this century, and have a much wider appeal. The images are relevant to researchers in areas as diverse as agriculture, ecology, planning and earth sciences. Yet the catalogue of these photos remains in its original card-based form.

CUCAP, in collaboration with the ADS and the UK national heritage agencies and ESRI, is working to facilitate access to this collection. The project will create a digital catalogue within a geographical information systems framework for management of the 410,000 photographs in the air photo library. Remote users in academic institutions throughout the UK will have access to the catalogue via the Internet through a map-based search interface. As a consequence, the value of the information held within this major historic resource will be increased substantially and made more readily available to a much wider international community.

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For more more on CUCAP's RSLP project, have a look at http://www.aerial.cam.ac.uk/rslp.htm

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Conference Round up

The six months since the last issue of ADS ONLINE have seen the ADS in action at a large number of conferences and other gatherings.

As well as presentations at CAA/UISPP in Ljubljana and the Society of American Archaeologists in Philadelphia, the Easter vacation saw the ADS at the Institute of Field Archaeologists in Brighton, as well as a presence at GISRUK at our home patch in the University of York. Subsequent months saw important presentations to a variety of groups including the Archaeology Departments at the Universities of Cambridge and Bradford, and the National Trust Archaeology Section, with a large successful gathering of local government archaeologists at an ADS-organised workshop. An EU-sponsored workshop in Sevilla allowed the User Services Manager to top up his tan after meeting with the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative in London.

The autumn conference season saw presentations closer to home at Digital Resources in the Humanities at the University of Sheffield and the annual mda gathering at the University of Newcastle. Activities continue apace over the next few months, with a rash of lectures and presentations to university departments, as well as TAG, Cedars and the British Records Association.

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Click here for up-to-date details of forthcoming events.

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Guides now available in paperback!

- **GIS Guide to Good Practice**
  edited by Mark Gillings and Alicia Wise
- **Archiving Aerial Photography and Remote Sensing Data: a Guide to Good Practice**
  Robert Bewley, Danny Donoghue, Vince Gaffney, Martijn van Leusen, and Alicia Wise

  .... and from our partners in the History Data Service ....
- **Digitising History: A Guide to Creating Digital Resources from Historical Documents**
  Sean Townsend, Cressida Chappell and Oscar Struijve

The ADS and the History Data Service are pleased to announce that three volumes of the AHDS guide to good practice series have now appeared in print, published by Oxbow Books at a price of £10. Write to Oxbow Books for more information: Oxbow Books, Park End Place, Oxford OX1 1HN England UK, tel: ++44 (0)1865 241249, fax: ++44 (0)1865 794449, or order them by email to oxbow@oxbowbooks.com Both of the ADS volumes, along with Digital Archives from Excavation and Fieldwork: Guide to Good Practice are available on the ADS website. For more details of this and other forthcoming guides on CAD and geophysics, point your browser at:

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http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/goodguides/g2gp.html

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where you will also find links to newly published guides from our sister services:

- *the Oxford Text Archive - Creating and documenting electronic texts*
- *the Visual Arts Data Service - Creating digital resources for the visual arts:standards and good practice*
- *the Performing Arts Data Service - Guide to Good Practice: Creating Digital Performance Resources.*

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Credits

The Archaeology Data Service is part of the Arts and Humanities Data Service, and resides at the University of York. It is jointly funded by the Joint Information System Committee and the Arts and Humanities Research Board.

The ADS collects, describes, catalogues, preserves and provides user support for digital resources created during archaeological research. The ADS promotes standards and guidelines for best practice in the creation, description preservation and use of spatial information to the AHDS. For those classes of archaeological data where archival bodies exist, the ADS collaborates to promote greater use of existing services.

ADS **NEWS** and ADS **ONLINE** are edited by William Kilbride, email. If you have any ideas about articles or features for the next issue in Spring 2001, then write to me at the email address given.

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