

## Obituaries

### Anthony David Friend Streeten

1954–2016



Anthony Streeten, who died of cancer on 29th July 2016 aged 62 while Regional Director for the East Midlands region of what is now Historic England, had a distinguished career in conservation. He grew up in Tunbridge Wells, the only son of Francis and Myrtle Streeten. Both his parents were keen on local history and Anthony's life-long interest in archaeology and historic building conservation was first ignited at the age of seven when his parents took him to Bignor Roman Villa in West Sussex. The custodian there, sensing Anthony's curiosity, gave him a detailed tour of the site, answered his many questions and presented him as a souvenir of his visit with a few stray tesserae that were lying around. Anthony's imagination was fired. Within a few years, although still under-age, he cut his archaeological teeth at weekends and in the school holidays helping at the medieval ironworking site at Minepit Wood Rotherfield, excavated by J H Money from 1965–67. Anthony's burgeoning skills so impressed Money that he later made Anthony a

member of his site staff on his subsequent excavations begun in 1968 at the Romano-British hill fort and ironworking settlement at Garden Hill in nearby Hartfield, East Sussex. At Tonbridge School Anthony was a keen member of the history and archaeology society and as an alternative to organised sports, which held no attractions for him, he and a friend cycled round the countryside of western Kent exploring and surveying its rich legacy of historic buildings. In 1973, between school and Newcastle University where he read Archaeology and Medieval History, Anthony joined a small archaeological team excavating part of Bayham Abbey near Lamberhurst on behalf of the Ancient Monuments Branch of the Department of Environment. This was Anthony's first 'ministry dig'. Later, following the untimely death of the director, he was to be responsible for writing-up the excavation and seeing it through to publication by the Sussex Archaeological Society. From Bayham Anthony was recruited to the team excavating the great medieval castle at Castle Acre in Norfolk. Excavations here were spread over a ten year period from 1972. Their success owed a great deal to Anthony who was to become joint-director of the project. His archaeological knowledge and organisational skills, together with his enthusiasm, good humour, endless patience and ability to get the best out of people, whether they were diggers on site or specialists contributing to the final reports, were crucial to the high standards of the excavation and the rapid publication of the subsequent excavation reports.

In 1976 Anthony's interest in medieval ceramics had led him to Southampton University and post-graduate work with the late David Peacock who was pioneering the technique of ceramic petrology which he was applying to a variety of pottery studies of all periods. It was around this time that Anthony joined the newly-formed Medieval Pottery Research Group, remaining a life-long member, although his professional career precluded his playing a very active role in the Group's activities. Anthony's subsequent thesis, titled *Medieval and Later Ceramic Production and Distribution in South-East England. A study in ceramic archaeology and historical geography*, was submitted in 1985. While working on his thesis Anthony had supported himself as a research assistant and by supervising on a number of archaeological excavations including those at Battle Abbey and Camber Castle. In 1983 he was appointed as an Assistant Inspector in the newly-formed English Heritage. His excavation and conservation experience and his reputation for hard work and efficiency had preceded him and provided a firm basis on which he built further skills guiding English Heritage policy and practice in many areas. He rose rapidly in the organisation and by the late 1980s was leading its ambitious relisting programme and was for long convenor of its Industrial Panel. Later he was the driving force behind devising and implementing concase, the English Heritage/Historic

England computerised case management system that remains in use to this day.

In 1986 Anthony wed Siriol Mynors; a devoted family man, the marriage brought him great happiness. Their son Charles, born in 1989, is a barrister; his brother Henry, born in 1993, is in the music business. From the early 1990s Anthony's work was centred in the East Midlands where in 2004 he was appointed as English Heritage's Regional Director. As such he developed and guided a busy team dealing with a huge and diverse range of cases involving ancient monuments and listed buildings, all with varying and sometime intractable problems and not all with sympathetic owners. Among Anthony's great strengths, which he had developed at an early age, was an ability to establish a rapport

with whoever he met. As Regional Director he was famed for going into hostile meetings, emerging with the outcome he wanted while leaving everyone else with the feeling that they had all made a positive contribution to this. Anthony placed huge trust in his own staff, nurturing and supporting them and in turn was rewarded by their loyalty and support. Perhaps Anthony's most lasting legacy is as an ambassador for Historic England. Working closely with his staff he was instrumental in establishing for the organisation a reputation throughout the East Midlands as a national body which brought great expertise and engagement to a local level.

*Jonathan Coad*

## Jan Thijssen

1943–2016



With sadness we report the death of Jan R.A.M. Thijssen. Jan passed away on 2 December 2016 at the age of 73 as a consequence of cancer. For many decades, Jan was a prominent Dutch archaeologist. He is best known for his impressive achievements as head of the archaeological services of the City of Nijmegen. Furthermore, Jan was appreciated for his extensive knowledge on many subjects, including Roman and (post-)medieval pottery.

Jan was born in the village of Vierlingsbeek, near

Venray (The Netherlands). Even at a young age he was collecting, identifying and classifying. At first, he was mainly interested in nature. He would roam around the floodplain of the Meuse, to study plants and birds. His first encounter with archaeology took place in 1960, when he and a class mate found Roman vessels from a 2nd-century grave. Jan took the finds to Nijmegen, to Museum G.M. Kam. The curator led the teenager into the museum depot to show him similar finds. Here, his interest in archaeology arose.

From now on, when in the field he would not only look for birds and plants. He searched and found buried walls and foundations, collected flints and taught himself to identify Roman pottery. He documented his finds and sent his data to the ROB (Rijksdienst voor het Oudheidkundig Onderzoek, State Service for Archaeological Investigation) and became their youngest correspondent.

After secondary school and military service, Jan embarked on a degree course in biology at the Catholic University of Nijmegen in 1964, with geology as a subsidiary subject, but he also attended lectures on provincial-Roman archaeology by Professor Jules Bogaers. He gave Jan the opportunity to excavate on the *castellum* and *vicus* at Cuijck between 1964 and 1966. This was Jan's first encounter with the late Roman period and late Roman *Rädchensigillata*, which would fascinate him for the rest of his life.

He finished his bachelor's degree in biology in 1973 and then started a masters degree in ecological prehistory with provincial Roman and medieval archaeology as subsidiary subjects at the Albert Egges van Giffen Institute for Pre- and Protohistory (IPP) in Amsterdam. After two years, he had passed all his exams, apart from his masters thesis. Knowing there were no paid jobs for graduated archaeologists