

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Art Gallery exhibitions began the year with *Milton Keynes: Image and Reality*, celebrating 40 years of one of Britain's most famous new planned cities, from architecture and public art to the archaeological finds from the towns and countryside which came before the city. With a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the exhibition was shown again at Milton Keynes Museum in the autumn of 2007, a welcome opportunity to take the City's treasures to the north of the County. The HLF also funded upgrades to display facilities at Milton Keynes Museum and a public learning programme, delivered by County Museum and Archives staff.

The major museum loan art exhibition, *Clear Skies and Storm Clouds: Visions of Buckinghamshire between the Wars*, was funded by the Museum Patrons, HLF and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. The show brought together loaned paintings, prints and books to complement the Museum's own collections by nationally known artists who lived and worked in the County in the 1920s and 1930s: John and Paul Nash, Clare Leighton and Eric Gill. The exhibition's theme – change and continuity in the countryside in the uncertain twenty years dominated by the memory of World War I – attracted visitors interested not simply in the lovely art on display but in landscapes, woodlands, farming, motoring and the beginnings of countryside conservation and planning. A broad learning programme, from watercolour and print-making workshops, to Chiltern walks, provided much valued opportunities for local partnerships. Bringing the story up-to-date, the linked open art competition 'Visions of Bucks', attracted 40 entries on the theme of the quintessential Bucks countryside which should be preserved into the future.

The Art Gallery also hosted a summer *Fanfare*, showcasing contemporary work by the Visual Images Group and the autumn exhibition of the Bucks Art Society. For the summer holidays and through until October half-term, the gallery was taken over by the giant Sensory Sculptures of Jan

Niedojadlo. Visitors flocked to take off their shoes and enjoy the sights, sounds, textures and smells of Chrysalis, Hive and Orbit. More fun and some nostalgia rounded off the programme at the end of 2007 with the *Christmas Toy Box* exhibition when the gallery was filled with Lego, puppets, games and doll's houses.

Georgian Room exhibitions ranged from *Fairy Rings and Witches Butter*, with loaned fungi models from the British Mycological Society and photographs from Buckinghamshire Fungus Group member Nick Jarvis, to *Bucks Bobbies* exploring Bucks crimes and criminals and the local Police force. The Muir Trust artist in residence, Michael Carberry, set up his jewellery workshop in the Learning Zones and displayed his work in the Georgian Room. The Museum worked with the national Portable Antiquities Scheme and many local metal detectorists on *Lost and Found: detecting the past*, which showcased 5 years' work in reporting and recording of Treasure and public archaeological finds in Bucks and Milton Keynes. A splendid range of Treasure items, acquired by the Museum with funding support from the Friends, was complemented by many generous public loans of other archaeological finds. Ros Tyrrell, our Finds Liaison Officer for Bucks and Milton Keynes had another busy year, entering finds information into the Portable Antiquities Database www.finds.org.uk, from a medieval silver gilt 'Green man' mount from Oakley, to a silver Civil War medal of Charles I from Wendover Dean which formed a pleasing match to the Parliamentary medal of the Earl of Essex, acquired in 2005.

Collections Showcase, the HLF funded gallery in the Viney Room launched in 2006 to showcase the stored collections, featured 1920s and 1930s costume and, in the summer, a wide range of 18th century material to celebrate the bicentenary of John Wilkes' election as MP for Aylesbury. The display brought together objects and documents from the Museum and the Society's collections and archive.

In April 2007, the Museum reduced opening hours (and thereby costs) by closing on Sunday afternoons, and earlier during the winter months. As a result, and in a challenging environment, visitor numbers fell overall to 113,000 over the year. The expanded programme of events and activities continued with seven special fun Saturdays, themed for Spring and Autumn wildlife, in July for the Roald Dahl Festival, National Archaeology Week and John Wilkes/Georgian Day, and then the Big Draw in October and a Tudor Christmas. The events programme, which brought over 5,000 visitors to the Museum, was greatly assisted by the participating local archaeological and wildlife groups and societies and by the Friends & Patrons volunteers. We were also delighted to open the Museum on two summer Sundays with the support of Aylesbury Town Council on the day of their Wilkes Georgian garden party event. The Big Draw events *Faces in the Museum* were led by local illustrator Louise Quirke with funding support from Vale of Aylesbury DFAS and for the first time drew in students from Aylesbury College.

This was another good year for the schools service with 15,841 pupils visiting in school groups. New sessions provided in the Museum again increased in popularity, and for the first time accounted for more than half of the school visits in total. Themes included *The Romans in Bucks*, the *Rock around Aylesbury* tour and workshop and *The Victorians*, as well as joint all-day workshops provided with CBS on *The Jury – Victorian Crime and Punishment* and *Making Victorian Life a Real Experience*. The Schools team offered a new outreach service that reached 200 children in three schools in 2007. The Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) and the Museum were successful in obtaining a ‘Learning Links’ grant from the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) to work with St. Mary’s School Aylesbury, to create curriculum resources for *Tudor Buckinghamshire*, and an all day joint schools KS2 workshop. New displays, for general visitors and for schools, were installed in the Tudor House, including several splendid panels of painted wall plaster previously in store.

The Museum took part in the National Inventory Research Project, now re-badged as the National Inventory of Continental European paintings (NICE). Coordinated by the National Gallery, the Project explored non-British oil paintings in

regional museum collections. For the Museum, Dr Anne Cowe researched 20 paintings, including a group of 17th century Flemish works from Denham Court. One painting, *View through an Architectural Setting: Courtyard at Rubens’s House*, attracted national and European attention as the earliest known view of the now lost fresco decoration of Rubens’ studio. The painting was displayed in the National Gallery *Discoveries* exhibition in November 2007 and will be loaned to the Rubenshuis museum in Antwerp for display. More detailed catalogue information on the museum’s paintings can be found online at <http://www.vads.ac.uk/collections/NIRP/museum.php>.

This was a big year for raising funds towards the purchase of two important Bucks paintings. Soon after the *Clear Skies and Storm Clouds* exhibition, the Museum was successful at auction in purchasing Paul Nash’s watercolour of *Whiteleaf Cross*, 1931, for £38,400. After further generous grants from national funders, the essential help of the Museum Patrons and extra funding from the County Council, we also acquired *Crossing the Ford* by Samuel Palmer, a watercolour of Collins Farm, Loosely Row in 1846, for £82,500.

Notable accessions to the collections included:

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACQUISITIONS

2007.2 Archive of Mesolithic/Bronze Age site at Little Marlow gravel quarry.

2007.7 Archive of Post-Medieval site at Brill Temple Street, producing quantity of kiln wasters.

2007.30 Archive of Iron Age/Roman site at Denham Park Farm, Denham.

2007.46 Archive of late Saxon/ Saxo-Norman site at Church Farm, Clifton Reynes.

2007.127.1–2 Two Roman silver *denarii*, from Prestwood. From the same site as the Prestwood “A” hoard. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure, and an addendum to the hoard. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

2007.130.1 17th century silver dress pin, with ear scoop, from Ivinghoe Aston. Twisted but complete. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

2007.131.1 16th century silver-gilt dress hook, probably English, from Soulbury. Central book shaped section with 7 knops and foliate finial, hook soldered onto backplate; engraved on front is

capital letter – either an A or K. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

2007.132.1 17th century silver locket, from Wendover Dean. Only one half, and damaged; engraved with CR and a crown, probably indicating support for Charles II. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

2007.136.1–33 Hoard of 33 bronze Roman coins, dating AD 348–353, from West Wycombe.

2007.178.1 Anglo-Saxon coin from Bledlow, AD 675–775. Copper-alloy contemporary forgery of a silver sceatta. Found with metal detector.

2007.179.1 Medieval silver-gilt mount from Oakley, in the form of a Green Man. Bearded face between two sprigs of foliage, 14th–15th century. Probably from book or casket. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of the MLA/V&A purchase grant fund, the Headley Trust, and the Friends of the Museum.

2007.193.1 Medieval ceramic roof finial, fragmentary. Brill ware with external green glaze, partially reconstructed but not full profile, from The Vaches moated site, Aston Clinton.

2007.195.1 Late Bronze Age looped and socketed axe, 1000–800 BC. Found at Sly Corner, Lee Common, c.1940.

2007.196.1 Reputed plague stone; found in Little Hampden Church during building work, c.1920.

2007.199.1 17th century silver dress pin, from Buckingham. Slightly bent but complete; owners initials ‘AH’ carved on one side, makers stamp ‘GW’ on the other. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

2007.200.1 Late Medieval/Early Post-Medieval silver-gilt finger ring from Buckingham. D-shaped hoop decorated with single zigzag and punches. Makers mark on inside. Found with metal detector and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

ART ACQUISITIONS

2007.95.1 Shell advertising poster featuring Dinton Folly, by Edward McKnight Kauffer, 1936.

2007.117.1 Whiteleaf Cross, by Paul Nash, watercolour, 1931.

2007.210.1 After Whistler, the Rape of the Vale, by Shirley Bradford, watercolour, 2007.

2007.211.1 Crossing the Ford, by Samuel Palmer, watercolour, 1846, depicting Collins Farm, Loosely Row, near Princes Risborough.

Clothing and Textile Acquisitions

2007.116.1–189 Collection of sample costume trimmings, fastenings and fabrics manufactured by CE Phipps & Co, 1968–72.

2007.216.1 Macrogauze hanging by Peter Collinwood, 1973.

NATURAL HISTORY ACQUISITIONS

2007.34–36 One mounted polecat and two study skins from Aston Clinton, Boarstall Woods and Tingewick.

2007.84.1–44 Collection of herbarium specimens collected by Roy Maycock.

2007.88.1 Herbarium specimen of rare cornfield annual, Broad-fruited Cornsalad (*Valerianella rimosa*). One of around fifty plants found growing on the Wormsley Estate, Stokenchurch. Donated by Andy McVeigh.

2007.119.1 Bracket fungus (*Ganoderma applanatum*) with extensive fly galls. From Moor Wood, Great Marlow. Donated by the Bucks Fungus Group.

GEOLOGY ACQUISITIONS

2007.141.1–2 Collection of Kimmeridge Clay ammonites collected during the Watermead Pliosaur excavation 1987. Donated by Dr Michael Oates 26.9.2007

SOCIAL HISTORY ACQUISITIONS

2007.56.1 Painted wooden panel from the carriage of Benjamin Disraeli, c.1876.

2007. 59.1 Framed poster commemorating the silver wedding of Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) and Princess Alexandra in 1888. Issued by WR and CA Boughton, tea dealers and grocers of Buckingham Street, Aylesbury.

2007.104.1–29 Police uniform and various items of police equipment and uniform issued to Leonard Woodley on joining Buckinghamshire Constabulary in 1959.

2007.209.1 Fine silver flowing forged ‘mobius’ ring made by Michael Carberry as Muir Trust Artist in Residence at the Museum, February to March 2007.

2007.213.1 Hat crocheted from recycled materials. Made by Wendy Greenway for 'A Hat for Ascot' class at Monks Risborough Horticultural Society show, 2006. The hat won first prize.

2007.214.1 Boxwood wood block carved by Eric

Gill for bookplate for Clarence Elliott, nurseryman and friend of John Nash, 1920s.

*Sarah Gray MA AMA
County Museum Curator*

CENTRE FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE STUDIES

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007–2008

It is a great pleasure to report the successful completion of the Buckinghamshire and Berkshire Manorial Documents Register (MDR) Project, to which BAS generously contributed £5,000 (see *Records*, 47 Pt 1, p. 247). The MDR for both counties can now be consulted on The National Archives (TNA) website at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr. The official launch of the Buckinghamshire MDR was performed by David Lidington MP at the County Museum and was followed by an ‘Explore Medieval Times’ family fun day. Other events to celebrate the completion of the MDR were a Study Day at Rewley House, Oxford (speakers included Professors Nigel Saul and Chris Dyer), and a launch at TNA later in the year, while an article by the Project Officer, Sarah Charlton, appeared in *History Today* in November 2008.

At the completion of the project (the MDR will, of course, be added to as further records come to light), the Buckinghamshire MDR contained 4,334 entries for surviving records of 326 manors, ranging from the 13th to the 20th centuries. The value of the project is amply demonstrated by the fact that records of Buckinghamshire manors were found in over 50 archive repositories, not including those in private hands. In fact, only about 50% of the Buckinghamshire entries relate to holdings at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS); other repositories include TNA, other local authority record offices, several Oxford colleges, and the Henry Huntington Library, California. The earliest document relating to this county is a court roll for Bledlow in 1246, included in a group of court rolls held at King’s College, Cambridge. A Note on the records of Quarrendon manor in Oxfordshire Record Office appears elsewhere in this volume.

ACCESSIONS

We received 129 accessions in calendar year 2007. These are some of the highlights.

We successfully bid at Christie’s for five 15th-century account rolls of the manor of Wavendon,

with financial assistance from the Francis Coales Charitable Foundation and the Buckinghamshire Record Society, for which we are very grateful. The rolls have been numbered in a later hand: ‘No. 2’, ‘No. 3’, ‘No. 5’, ‘No. 11’ and ‘No. 12’. ‘No. 1’ was already held by us as part of the BAS manorial collection, but the sequence suggests that there may be at least six others still out there somewhere. The five documents sold at Christie’s are recorded as having been rescued from a fire that gutted a London solicitor’s office in 1905, but it is to be hoped that the missing six had already been separated from the others and were not involved in the fire.

Other purchases included the minute book of the Adstock inclosure commissioners, 1797–1799, about 85 bills for work done for Christ’s Hospital and Almshouse Charity, Buckingham, 1730–1833, and a mortgage for £70 by John Ash, dyer, of his house called Wells tenement with ‘three greate coppers of brass’ in the dye house, situated in Amersham on the common footway from London to Aylesbury and next to the Swan, 1664.

One of our most-used series is the registers of motor vehicle licences for Buckinghamshire, which date back to 1903 when vehicle licensing was introduced; the first plate, BH1, was issued to Tonman Mosley, Lord Anslow. Several volumes are missing from the series, presumed destroyed, so it was encouraging to receive one of the lost volumes as a donation. This contains licences BH1403–1621, dated 1911–1912, together with the register of ‘heavy motor cars’ BH01–0185 (1905–1919).

Records of the Amersham United Charities were received, including the accounts of Governors of Sir William Drake’s Almshouses, 1675–1735, 1797–1964, with a copy of rules of the Almshouses, 1676, papers relating to a suit in Chancery, 1731–1732, and deeds of Burtons Farm, Chalfont St Giles (part of the endowment of the Almshouses), 1511 and 1608–1660, together with minutes and accounts of Miss Day’s Almshouses. Also from Amersham, this time the parish church, we received papers relating to the trial of four Quakers

for non-payment of tithes, 1708–1709, and land-tax assessments for Amersham, Chesham and other parishes in Burnham Hundred for 1736, pre-dating the county's series, which begins in 1780.

Mr Roger Evans, formerly the County's Historic Buildings Officer, deposited his personal collection of about 4,000 slides of historic buildings in the county, c.1974–1998, as well as slides relating to the work of the Buckinghamshire Historic Buildings Trust, including 22 Milton Keynes Village, known as Birds Cottage. This is to date the only building which the Trust has itself repaired, having previously purchased it for that purpose. A 'base cruck' hall structure, probably dating from the 14th century and perhaps the manor house of the Kaynes family, after whom Milton Keynes was named, the building was sold by the Trust after completion of the work.

We received records of the Wethered family of Great Marlow from 1707 onwards, including deeds relating to their brewery business, their house called 'Remnantz' and other properties, and other records of members of the family. Much of the material was used by the late Mr Anthony Wethered in his book, *The Power and the Brewery*.

Slough Library deposited records of the Nash family of Langley Marish, including deeds of property in Langley, 18th–20th centuries, and the marriage settlement of William Nash of Upton Court and Ann Allnutt, 1808. The University of Exeter donated the notes of Sergeant James L. Turnbull of West Hartlepool, made in the course of his training as a flight engineer at RAF Halton from 1936. Sergeant Turnbull was killed in action in 1942.

The National Farmers Union deposited several boxes of records of the Buckinghamshire County Branch from the mid-20th century, and we also received records of the Winslow Prime Stock Show (formerly Fat Stock Show) and Dairy Show, including minutes, 1936–1983, letter book, 1912–1926, and programmes for shows, 1920s–1960s.

Other miscellaneous records were received included: a 9-year lease from the overseers of the poor of Great Marlow, to Thomas Lane of land called Barwicks in Great Marlow, 1668; papers, plans and photographs relating to the demolition of The Bulls Head, Market Square, Aylesbury, and development of the site, 1963–1971; photographs of construction work on the A41 between Aylesbury and Aston Clinton in the 1950s; the prescription book of F. J. Janes, chemists, of 5

Kingsbury Square, Aylesbury, 1844–1859; sale particulars for The Pineapple beerhouse, White Lion Road, Amersham Common, 1902; copies of the Bucks News Budget for High Wycombe and area, issued during the General Strike, 1926; an album of photographs of Chelmscote Manor, Soulbury, before and after restoration in 1959; and minute books of Princes Risborough Literary Institute, 1891–1940, and Parkfield Rovers Football Club, 1934–1937.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES INSPECTION

In May 2007 representatives of The National Archives (TNA) visited CBS to carry out their periodical inspection. Repositories are measured against the TNA's *Standard for Record Repositories* and the British Standard BS5454: 2000 for the storage and exhibition of archives. The inspectors highlighted areas of concern, including the critical need for additional strongroom space, better staff accommodation to facilitate work on collections, such as cataloguing, and additional staffing resources to tackle the cataloguing backlog and to build on 'excellent work' in developing educational services. There was also much positive comment, however, including praise for the strenuous efforts of committed staff in maintaining the service at 'its current good standard' despite some fundamental problems.

Following the report, we received funding to increase our staffing levels. We have been able to recruit one additional archivist and one additional assistant. These appointments should enable us to devote more time to cataloguing without, we hope, any diminution of the service to the public.

RECORD SOCIETY WEBSITE

We have been involved in setting up a new website for the Buckinghamshire Record Society at www.bucksinfo.net/brs which is mainly intended as a site for digital copies of the Society's publications. So far, Volumes 1–22 (many now out of print) have been mounted on the website. There is also information on how to join the Record Society and a full list of their publications.

BILL TORRENS (1957–2008)

Many of our readers will have learned of the death of Bill Torrens, our Local Studies Librarian since

1997, who died on 6 March 2008 from complications following treatment for cancer. After reading history at the University of Southampton, Bill initially worked in the civil service but, in 1994, enrolled at Thames Valley University for an MA in Information Management, where he discovered that his interest lay in Local Studies. As his thesis was on 'Photographic Archives in Local Studies Libraries', it was appropriate that his first post with Buckinghamshire County Council involved digitising the Library and Museum photograph collections. That work is now available on the County Council website as the Photographs Database of over 20,000 images.

In 1997, Bill was appointed Local Studies Librarian, based initially in the County Reference Library until the new Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies opened in 2002, when he and his team became the first point of contact for all our visitors. Although he found his vocation relatively late in life, Bill had the satisfaction of doing a job he loved for over ten years. He was passionately interested in both local and family history, and freely and patiently shared his knowledge and expertise with anyone who asked for his help. His strong ethos of

public service meant that no request was ever too much trouble for him. Often he was able to answer an enquiry from his own store of knowledge; at other times he would suggest the lead that enabled research to be taken a stage further.

Bill's interest in Victorian photography led him to create the very popular Victorian Prisoners database from the registers of the county gaol of the 1870s, held in the county archives (see *Records* 45, pp. 245–6). Outside work, his main historical interest was the American Civil War, for which he compiled records of 23,000 officers of the Army of Northern Virginia. He also had an enviable talent for enjoying the good things in life, such as food, wine and travel, as well as Arsenal Football Club.

It goes without saying that Bill is very much missed. His wife Barbara and we his colleagues are all very grateful for the many expressions of sympathy and sorrow that show the great esteem and affection in which he was held by so many of our readers.

*Roger Bettridge FHA RMSA
County Archivist*

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

REPORT FOR 2007–2008

The main achievements of the year related to the commencement of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Historic Towns Project, funded by English Heritage, completion of Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past and securing political support and financial backing for Quarrendon Leas. In addition the service has been working on a Chiltern Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and started preparing for the reform of heritage protection legislation outlined in the Heritage Protection White Paper (published March 2007). Core activities in planning, conservation and the Historic Environment Record were maintained. At the end of the year we bade farewell to Kim Biddulph, who together with Julia Wise, worked so hard to make Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past such a successful project. Kim was seen off with an unusual gift – a replica Bronze Age sword!

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The service has continued to contribute to the new Local Development Frameworks (LDF) for each district. This can be challenging as the new local policies are expected to be both succinct and locally distinctive; it is no longer acceptable just to re-iterate national policy. Although there is a certain logic to this new approach, it is still unfamiliar and it can be challenging to provide positive deliverable policies for the historic environment. This became evident in the draft Wycombe District LDF which distilled a whole chapter on heritage in the previous Local Plan into a single line in a general environmental policy. Representations to the inquiry panel hearing resulted in some improved wording. However, there is no doubt that the new national planning system presents both significant challenges as well as opportunities for the heritage sector which will require conceptual leaps to address.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

One example of such a conceptual leap is the draft "Buckinghamshire Green Infrastructure Strategy"

which highlights priorities for provision of accessible green space and includes the historic environment within its definition, key components and opportunity areas. A tangible policy outcome has been the demonstration that to meet national standards a new 100 hectare public green space is needed on the north side of Aylesbury – as the ancient monument site at Quarrendon Leas meets both these criteria it has become a critical element in the strategy. As a consequence of the Archaeology Society's Heritage Open Day at Quarrendon in 2006, a high-level working party was convened by the County Council which led to the Council deciding to establish a 'Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust' to take ownership of and manage Quarrendon Leas, and potentially other such sites in the future. With this endorsement it was possible to secure offers of funding from the Government's 'Growth Areas Fund' and English Heritage to begin a programme of access and conservation works in 2008-9. Elsewhere in the county Whaddon Chase on the western flank of Milton Keynes is another historic landscape in a critical location while in the south the focus is likely to be on enhancement of existing sites such as Langley Park.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Planning and conservation advice casework involved 649 consultations, of which 177 required positive follow up. The year saw many small-scale evaluations and watching briefs, which are reported in Archaeological Notes, and a few more substantial investigations. The most significant results were obtained on the Hardwick-Marsh Gibbon gas pipeline, at Broughton on the outskirts of Aylesbury and in mineral extraction sites near Denham. The gas pipeline affected a Roman well containing a waterlogged structure and a Roman stone building which was preserved in-situ by boring the pipe underneath it. At Broughton two evaluations found evidence for a medieval moated site and occupation along Broughton Lane. At Denham further trial excavation was conducted to refine pri-

orities for investigation of well-preserved Mesolithic sites in the valley floor where there is a preserved buried landscape of the late glacial/early post-glacial period.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

The Sites and Monuments Record was officially renamed the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) to reflect the new inclusive terminology of heritage protection reform. A plan has been completed to prioritise actions to address the expected requirements of new legislation. The HER handled 134 enquiries, a slight reduction on the previous year probably reflecting the availability on-line of 'Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past' which was receiving over 2000 visits per month up from 1800 per month the previous year. With the completion of Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past, the County's HER has become one of only twenty on-line HERs in England out of a total of eighty-one such records. Very few HERs have comparable on-line educational resources.

CONSERVATION

The service continued to provide advice for the Environmental Stewardship grant scheme that provides farmers and landowners with grants for sensitive management of sites and landscapes. The scheme involves an historic environment strand which required advice for nine 'higher-tier' applications.

The Archaeology Service also manages a £10,000 per annum grant from English Heritage to improve management of ancient monuments. Implementation began on a management plan prepared by Albion Archaeology, to address a series of problems relating to tree management and land contamination at Danesfield Camp, Medmenham, a former military base, while an interpretation board has been commissioned for the nearby Medmenham Camp hillfort. Applications for future grants would be welcomed from owners of eligible monuments. Further information can be obtained from Eliza Alqassar at the Archaeology Service.

HISTORIC TOWNS PROJECT

To better understand the evolution of Buckinghamshire's towns and with a view to contributing

towards their future management, the County Archaeological Service with Milton Keynes Design and Conservation team, is undertaking a survey of 30 historic towns in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. These towns range from places which are still recognisably towns today, such as Amersham, Aylesbury, High Wycombe and Newport Pagnell, to villages that once aspired to urban status such as Denham and Hanslope. The project includes places like Gerrards Cross which only grew up in the early twentieth-century but excludes the modern city of Milton Keynes, largely constructed after 1967. The first tranche of towns studied by the project are: Beaconsfield, Buckingham, Haddenham and Long Crendon. Amersham, Aylesbury, Bletchley & Fenny Stratford, Newport Pagnell and Princes Risborough will follow in tranche 2.

The Buckinghamshire Historic Towns project is largely funded by English Heritage and forms part of a national programme of urban characterisation which aims to examine historic towns from their origins to the present day. The project method uses archaeological data, maps, photographs and documentary sources, as well as information gathered from visits to each town. On completion, the project will have compiled the information into an easily accessible report for each town. There will also be a series of digital maps that will characterise each townscape and its development. The data for the project will be held by the Historic Environment Records for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes respectively.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Over the next year the Service will be fully engaged with establishing the Buckinghamshire Conservation Trust and implementing the first phase of access and conservation works at Quarrendon Leas.

The Heritage Protection Bill is expected to be brought before parliament to 2008-9 for implementation in 2010/11. Specific proposals involve the merging of the various systems for designating important heritage sites, procedures for obtaining consent for works to them, and placing a statutory obligation on all local authorities to maintain, or have access to, an Historic Environment Record. There will also be a new integrated planning-policy statement replacing the existing guidance sepa-

rately covering archaeology and the historic environment. The Archaeology Service will be taking a leading role in co-ordinating the county's response to the new system; a challenging agenda at any time and likely to be all the more so in an economic downturn.

For further information on the County Archaeological Service, visit our web site: <http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/archaeology/index.htm>

*Alexander (Sandy) Kidd
County Archaeologist
Buckinghamshire County Council*

MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

REPORT FOR 2007

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

The total number of planning applications received during 2007 was 2077, of which 282 were considered in more detail and 63 had archaeological planning conditions imposed.

Archaeological or historic building recording works commenced on 43 sites, including 6 excavations. Highlights included:

- A 1.5 hectare open-area excavation close to Radcliffe School, Wolverton, which revealed a single-phase 7th century Saxon cemetery. The excavation recovered 81 inhumations, and 3 cremations. Many of the inhumations contained grave goods including: a silver necklace and pendant; a millefiori inlaid disc-brooch; and a set of scales. The cemetery may belong to the Saxon settlement previously discovered to the north at Wolverton Mill.
- A 1.6 hectare open-area excavation to the north-east of Broughton village which revealed early-Neolithic occupation and pottery in addition to Iron Age and Roman enclosures and a small late Iron Age / early Roman cremation cemetery. The final phase of the site comprised a single sunken featured building containing early Saxon (c.5th century AD) pottery and worked bone artefacts including a triangular comb.
- A 0.7 hectare open-area excavation at Newton Leys (Bletchley) which revealed a mid to late Iron Age settlement. The site occupied the lower ground of a stream valley and revealed evidence of flood events. Excavated features included six round-house gullies, a pottery kiln, and probable stock enclosures.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

During 2007 the HER room was used by external researchers 18 times and 3 organisations entered into licence agreements for HER information in digital form.

The English Heritage response to the SMR Audit identified the following additional work to bring the HER up to stage one benchmarking standard:

- Creation of an access and charging policy
- Development of an outreach programme
- Data exchange agreements with adjacent authorities
- Enhance the HER with 20th century development information
- Produce guidance notes for the HER
- Compliance with MIDAS and INSCRIPTION standard
- Create a digitisation, collection and disposal policy
- Create a Disaster Recovery Plan
- Provide a structure plan showing the position of the HER within the organisation.

OTHER INITIATIVES

The Senior Archaeological Officer completed work on the Milton Keynes City Development Atlas which provides details of many of the building and landscape developments within the city area. This atlas is publicly available as a GIS layer on the MKI Observatory website: <http://www.mkiobservatory.org.uk/mapping.aspx> A short article on the project was featured in the news section of the English Heritage, Heritage Gateway website: <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/News>

Shane Dower, the council's Heritage Development Officer, produced a Milton Keynes Heritage Strategy as part of the Council's Cultural Strategy. This focussed on delivering the major heritage changes required for the Milton Keynes Growth agenda. Workshops held in 2007 and 2008 have examined the twelve priority objectives of the four-part Heritage Vision. Both of the council's archaeological officers have contributed by proposing five archaeological projects to be included in the strategy and advising on the Historic Environment element. Details of the heritage strategy can be viewed at <http://www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/heritage>

On 17 November the Archaeological Officer organised the first Milton Keynes Council Archaeology Day. This event, held in the Local Studies Library, was a great success and was attended by over 100 people. The day centred around a series of presentations by professional archaeologists on recent work in Milton Keynes including the important sites at Gayhurst and

Broughton Manor Farm. Stands provided by active local field work groups also proved popular as was Ros Tyrrell (Finds Liaison Officer) who was on finds identification duty

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