

# BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY MUSEUM

## ANNUAL REPORT 2005–2006

This fourth year of free admission to the new-look Museum opened with the *Buckinghamshire in the Civil War* exhibition, November 2004 to February 2005. The quality of the loan paintings, a range of publications and the varied programme of events – from study days to the Sealed Knot camped in the garden – had contributed to the Museum's highest ever visitor total of 148,011 for 2004/05. The Society's support for a successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £35,000 and indeed throughout the exhibition was greatly appreciated.

During 2004, the Museum developed a further Lottery bid and public fundraising appeal to enable the acquisition and display of a rare surviving 1920s car made by the Cubitt Company of Aylesbury. Plans were developed for a new 'display garage' in the Museum garden and the Society's Trustees gave their permission for the building works which began in the Spring of 2005. An archaeological watching brief revealed no surviving evidence. Again, the Society's support was a key factor in the successful *Your Heritage* bid for £50,000 towards the project costs of £66,000. After a public appeal, Cubitt car BH 9723 was purchased for the collections and the new display building opened in June 2005.

Art Gallery exhibitions included *Miracle of Flight* (artist Paul Stevenson, early flights around Aylesbury and flying animals and birds), *About the Chilterns* (40th anniversary art exhibition of the Chiltern Society), *Chiltern Views* (art from the collections), *A Garden and Three Houses* (architect Peter Aldington's 1960s houses in Haddenham) and *The Swinging Sixties*.

The year culminated in the *Bucks Finest 1905-2005* exhibition, which ran from November 2005 until April 2006 and marked the centenary of the 1905 exhibition of the County's treasures which finally provided a springboard for the Society's purchase of the Grammar School buildings and the opening of the Museum to the public in 1908. The exhibition celebrated the Society's museum and splendid collections, managed independently until 1955 and in partnership with the County Council

for a further half century.

During the year the Heritage Lottery Fund made a further grant of £50,000 to complete the installation of the *Collections Showcase* gallery in the Viney Room, first piloted in 2003 with costume cases and drawers funded by the Clothworkers Company. *Collections Showcase*, with over 100 cases and drawers displaying the riches of the stored collections, opened in June 2006.

The new Georgian Room gallery, meeting Government Indemnity standards, displayed the Society's paintings by Balthasar Nebot of the gardens of Hartwell House in 1738 and the Ancient Egyptian material recently researched by the *Virtual Egypt* partnership project with the Petrie Museum. The results are online at [www.accessingvirtualegypt.ucl.ac.uk/COVES/index.php](http://www.accessingvirtualegypt.ucl.ac.uk/COVES/index.php). Also displayed were the Museum's rich collection of works by John Piper and *Getting to Know Bernwood*, the results of an 18 month HLF-funded project led by the County Archaeological Service. The year ended with a further HLF-funded exhibition. *Picking Up the Threads* explored the conservation of fragile 19th century flags belonging to the Bucks Military Museum Trust.

This was a record year for the schools service. 12,985 school children visited the museum in organised groups, and not just to the Roald Dahl Children's Gallery which offers schools a 90 minute teaching session where they are encouraged to investigate themes from history, natural history, science and technology through the characters and stories of Roald Dahl. Schools were also attracted by two specially developed curriculum and family learning exhibitions: *Victorians* focused on the lives of Victorian children and *Tudors*, funded by the Ernest Cook Trust. Both exhibitions offered schools a teaching session in the gallery led by museum staff. *Victorians* and *Crime and Punishment* schools workshops were further developed, working with the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies, centred on the Aylesbury painting, *The Jury* by John Morgan 1861, which was acquired during the year after a further public

appeal and generous grants from the Society, HLF, the Art Fund and the MLA/V&A Purchase Fund.

The overall visitor total for the year was slightly down on the previous, exceptional year but a gratifying figure nonetheless at 133,452.

This was also the third year of the Museum's participation in the national 3-year *Portable Antiquities Scheme*, funded by the DCMS to enhance the reporting and recording of Treasure and other public archaeological finds in Bucks and Milton Keynes through our Finds Liaison Officer. The scheme is already bringing more finds to light as evidenced by the significant archaeological accessions listed below and by new data added to the County Sites and Monuments Record.

Notable accessions to the collections included:

## ARCHAEOLOGY

**2005.62** Site archive from evaluation at Henry Floyd School, Oxford Road, Aylesbury; includes clay pipe and Medieval/post-Medieval brick and tile.

**2005.81** Three objects found by metal detecting during construction of a school at Buckingham: Medieval lead seal matrix, suspension loop at top, inscription SIGILE ISABEL [...]ADIT, centre design of 8 pointed star; late Saxon decorated copper-alloy strap end, 700–1000 AD, Trewhiddle style decoration with zoomorphic terminal; Roman or Medieval copper-alloy finger ring, apparently originally with gemstones on bezel and shoulders and mother of pearl discs inlaid around rest of the hoop, but all but one mother of pearl disc has gone.

**2005.83** Five worked flints from Chalfont St Peter allotments; includes scraper and notched flake; collected during Young Archaeologist Club event (staff find).

**2006.5** Medieval gold finger ring, set with garnet – found by metal detectorist at Wendover and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum, MLA/V&A Purchase Fund and Headley Trust.

**2006.6** Anglo Saxon silver-gilt saucer brooch fragment found by metal detectorist at Edlesborough and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

**2006.7** Roman copper-alloy folding knife handle, in form of a panther, found by metal detectorist near Buckingham. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

**2006.19** Material from Brill Kiln excavations in 1961 by Prof Jope, previously accessioned by the Ashmolean Museum, donated to BCM. No paper archive associated with the finds, which are largely kiln waster sherds.

**2006.21** Late Roman copper-alloy plate brooch with enamel, found by metal detectorist at Beaconsfield. Purchase.

**2006.22** Silver Medieval quatrefoil brooch, found by metal detectorist at Slapton, and declared Treasure. Purchased with the aid of Friends of the Museum.

**2006.23** Late Bronze Age socketed axe hoard from North Bucks – found by metal detectorist and illegally sold on Ebay. Purchaser returned items to British Museum and from there donated to the County Museum.

## ART

**2006.9** Portrait of Sir Henry Lambton of Redfield House by W E Miller, 1896, oil on canvas. Transferred from Bucks County Council.

**2006.10** Two portraits, William Crouch (Clerk of the Peace and to the County Council, 1888–1924), and Richard E Millard 1974, both oil on canvas. Transferred from Bucks County Council.

**2006.20** Watercolour by Rex Whistler of a nun walking through the field near the vicarage in Bierton, 1940.

**2006.32** Print of Snow Scene, Meadle by John Nash from *Modern Masterpieces* ed. by Frank Rutter, 1930s. Purchase.

**2006.40** Two portraits of John and Mrs Grubb of Horsenden House, attributed to John Zoffany, 1784, oil on canvas. Purchased by the Patrons of the Museum.

**2006.41** *The South Front of Stowe House, Buckinghamshire* by John Buckler, watercolour heightened with gum arabic and scratching out, about 1810. Purchased with assistance from the Art Fund, MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and Patrons of the Museum.

## CLOTHING AND TEXTILES

**2006.8** Group of children's clothing worn by members of the Crouch family, 1920s, and a blue cotton ugli, mid 19th century.

**2006.33** Group of children's clothing worn by Mrs Ellams, about 1948–9.

## NATURAL HISTORY

- 2005.76** Elephant hawkmoth, Ivinghoe.
- 2005.132** Fossil turtle carapace from the perimeter walls of Hartwell House. Collected by Edwin Hollis in 1940 but found unaccessioned in the stores. Thought to have originally come from the Dorset or Isle of Wight coast.
- 2005.159** Framed geological diagram of the Wendover locality.
- 2005.160** Specimen of blue-green algae, *Nostoc commune*, Marlow.

## SOCIAL HISTORY

- 2005.112** Posy ring from Drayton Parslow, 17th century. Damaged silver ring (possibly cut open) with simple decoration and inscribed 'I Live in hope'. Purchased with the assistance of the Friends of the Museum.
- 2005.113** Collection of household items: hammered pewter teapot and stand, hammered pewter sugar bowl, boxed set of 6 fish knives and forks in a box, 1933 wedding present, Aston Clinton; Victorian ceramic plant holder and stand, lorgnette and sewing set in box from near Amersham. Gift.
- 2005.114** Two medals: bronze medal or plaque of Henry Wright (Bucks and Herts Regiment 1914-18); First World War Service Medal (no ribbon) of 122122 Driver H Wright RA (Bucks and Herts Regiment). Gift.
- 2005.115** Two metal printing blocks from the Bucks Motor Company. Gift.
- 2005.116** Stationery: 8 ivory paper folders used at Hazel, Watson and Viney printers, early 20th century; 11 birthday cards in assorted designs some with simple animation, probably 1940s.
- 2005.127** Sign, wooden, varnished and painted with the rules of the Ellesborough Almshouse. Gift.
- 2005.128** Sign from the Nestle factory, Aylesbury. Printed mesh, 'Nestles and Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk Company'. Gift.
- 2005.129** Sign from hairdresser's shop in Gypsy House, Great Missenden (now the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre). Painted perspex with a hardboard backing, 'Marjorie Kemp Hairdressers'. Gift.
- 2005.130** Bronze sundial c1595 from Dinton church. Formerly in a stone pillar in the churchyard, more recently kept in the vestry. Has iron fixing nails and a detached triangular gnomon. Loan.
- 2005.131** Rollerblades, 'New Street Fox' brand, new pair in original box, 2002. Gift.
- 2005.133** 17th century joined chair from Kimble Church reputed to have been used by John Hampden. Loan, the Wardens of the Kimbles PCC.
- 2005.134** Collection of material relating to Merrick and Richard Chapman, runners: 59 running medals won by Richard Chapman, early 20th century; two photographs of Richard Chapman running, undated (probably late 1950s); programmes and certificates relating to Richard Chapman, 1940s. Gift.
- 2005.143** Gold ring, bent and broken, 16th or early 17th century, with square cusped and carved shoulders, central stone setting is empty. Found by a metal detector on National Trust property at West Wycombe. Purchase.
- 2005.144** Chalice and lid, silver, from the parish church of St Peter and Paul, Ellesborough, mid 16th century. Gift.
- 2005.147** Items from the Young Offenders' Institute, Bierton, formerly Aylesbury Gaol, removed during refurbishments to Wing B in January 2004: original window in 7 pieces; lock or lock plate from Victorian cell. Gift.
- 2005.152** 1957 New World gas cooker, and associated documentation, used at the donor's home in Little Chalfont since its purchase. Gift.
- 2005.153** County arms shield crest; From above the side door of County Hall Aylesbury damaged by fire in 1970. Loan.
- 2005.156** Laundry box of brown fibreboard with leather strap printed 'Quarry Laundry Marlow' and wooden coat hanger marked 'Langston Bourne End'. Gift.
- 2006.1** Trade token, 17th century, farthing, issued by Edmond Baltswell of The Bakers Arms, Lavendon, design initials EAB. Gift.
- 2006.11.1** Oval wreath-shaped plaque with coat of arms of the Winwood family of Denham, lords of the manor of Quanton and builders of the almshouses, c1760s. Gift.
- 2006.12** Trade token, 17th century, farthing, issued by John Morris of High Wycombe, design stick of candles. Gift.
- 2006.13** Trade token, 17th century, halfpenny, die variation of Manton 186, issued by Thomas Godwin of Winslow, design initials TIG. Gift.
- 2006.24** Two toys, a dog and a monkey, early 20th century; favourite toys of the donor's mother and father. Gift.

**2006.25** Silver-gilt dress hook from Hambleden, with spherical head divided in half by transverse band; each decorated with applied filigree in the shape of circlets and knops, 16th century. Declared Treasure and purchased with assistance from the Friends of the Museum.

**2006.29** Booklet, 'Strolls in Beechy Bucks' by TWD Smith published by the Great Central Railway Company, 4th edition, probably c1910–20. Purchase.

**2006.30** Pie dish marked 'NESTLES MILK', obtained by collecting tokens from Nestle products. Gift.

**2006.31** Items collected from the Nestlé factory: souvenir brick from the chimney mounted on a wooden stand; 3? pound tin of MAGGI 'Soupe de Poisson'; 2 pound tin of MAGGI 'Home Style

Asparagus Soup'; bottle of MAGGI sauce; 2oz packet of MAGGI 'Granulated Aspic Jelly'; half pint glass milk bottle marked 'NESTLE'; disposable hat as worn on the production line; souvenir ceramic pot and lid marked 'clay used from foundations of demolished 1870 building State 2 Reconstruction Nestle Aylesbury 1976'. Gift.

**2006.34** Booklet, 'Buckinghamshire County Handbook' undated but probably after 1937. Gift.

**2006.35** Booklet, 'Shell Shilling Guide to Buckinghamshire' dated 1963. Gift.

**2006.42** 'Lennox' copper farthing of King James 1, minted 1613–1625 in poor condition. Found during 1993 building works north of the coach house at County Museum.

*Sarah Gray MA AMA  
County Museum Curator*

# CENTRE FOR BUCKINGHAMSHIRE STUDIES

REPORT FOR APRIL 2005–MARCH 2006

We received 150 accessions in 2005, a full list of which will appear on our website: [www.buckscc.gov.uk/archives](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/archives). Many are Buckinghamshire County Council records selected for transfer to archives through the agency of our Modern Records service. They include the official signed minutes of the Council, 1973–1984, and of numerous committees, mainly for the period 1974–1995, though some fill in gaps in our earlier holdings as far back as 1944. We also received 50 boxes of school governors' minutes, 1974–1996. Files were received on subjects as diverse as the acquisition of Brill windmill and Black Park, the fire at Missenden Abbey, the Stony Stratford and Wolverton tramway, the A418 Wing by-pass, Heathrow airport, sales of land, the county coat of arms, and Green Belt land.

A generous grant of £300 from the Francis Coales Foundation enabled us to purchase a map of part of the parish of Haversham in 1805. Comparison with a written survey of 1799 shows that it depicts the estate of Alexander Small and the map may have been produced for his sale of the manor in 1806. As there is neither an inclosure nor a title plan for Haversham, this map is of more than ordinary significance.

We also purchased a collection of about 270 letters written by an Eton shop assistant, Charles Baker, to his fiancée, Elizabeth Odell, between 1868 and 1873. Charles worked in the shop of John Atkins 'Grocer, Tea Dealer and Provision Merchant' at 3 High Street, Eton. He wrote to Elizabeth, a teacher in Saffron Walden, twice a week and his letters give an insight into the daily life and concerns of a man in his position. They record his views on a variety of subjects and he occasionally reflects on his achievements and also his dreams for the future, which do not always seem within his grasp: *'I sometimes feel almost in despair of ever realising my hopes & desires when I think how the bright dreams of expected enjoyment pale & fade before the realities & monotony of every-day life'*.

The British Records Association transferred some property records of Benskins Brewery,

Watford, among them deeds of the Chequers, Pitstone, 1696–1983, and the Chequers, Prestwood, 1757–1986, and the deposit also includes an auction sale catalogue of about 1930 for Amersham Brewery and over 100 Buckinghamshire pubs. Other properties for which deeds were received from various sources include the Bull Inn, Bovingdon, 1684–1880, Brickhouse Farm, Nash, 1660–1808, Quainton Farm, Quainton, 1578–1695, Stampwell Farm, Chalfont St Peter, 1640–1669, No. 86 Easton Street, High Wycombe, 1658–1937, and Fleet Marston Chapel Ground estate, 1813 and 1844.

Business records of Glory Mills, Wooburn, a paper mill which closed in 2002, were deposited, including wages records, 1888–1950, and three books of samples.

The oldest document received during the year was a feoffment dated 1453 of a croft of land called 'Symmyscrofte' in Amersham, part of a collection of deeds of what eventually became Abbots Farm and then Nightingales Farm in Chalfont St Giles and Amersham. Many of the parchments have suffered badly from being eaten by mice.

Berkshire Record Office transferred to us files of the organ adviser for the Diocese of Oxford relating to organs in eleven churches: Addington, Chalfont St Giles, Clifton Reynes, Colnbrook, Datchet, Ellesborough, Ickford, Maids Moreton, Milton Keynes City, Slough and Wraysbury.

An unusual donation was a DVD of films of two operations at the Royal Buckinghamshire Hospital made in 1943 by Dr Albert Rinsler, as a medical student, and his brother Dr Michael Rinsler, then a schoolboy. The original films were converted to DVD by the National Film Archives of the British Film Institute.

Although not an original document, it would be a pity not to mention the transcript we were given of the diary of Richard Heritage (1803–1865), stonemason and innkeeper, of Marsh Gibbon, made by Mr Leslie Watkins. As well as Heritage's personal and working life, the diary also includes fascinating information on village life, including



recreations, such as music and cricket.

South Bucks District Council offered us the collection of over 10,000 building control plans of Eton Rural District Council, c.1897–1948, which they had microfiched. We could never have taken the complete set, but the offer coincided with preparations for celebrations of the centenary of the Metropolitan Railway arriving at Gerrards Cross, and we were able, with the help of the organisers, led by Julian Hunt, to go through the plans up to 1938 and make a selection of about 2,500. Over 100 of the plans were subsequently displayed at the centenary exhibition at Gerrards Cross in 2006.

To keep up-to-date with accessions and other events, you can subscribe to our quarterly newsletter, *Off The Record*.

## PREMISES

The requirement to make savings in our budget forced us, after much soul-searching, into the decision to close the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies on Mondays with effect from May 2006. Please note that we are still open Tuesdays-Saturdays each week, with late opening in local studies on Thursdays.

In March-April 2006 our automatic fire-suppression system was renewed and the extinguishing agent was changed from carbon dioxide to the inert gas FM-227. Unfortunately, the necessary work in the strongrooms disrupted our searchroom service and at very short notice, but it was not something that we could postpone. In the course of the work, the CO<sub>2</sub> was inadvertently released into one of the strongrooms, an event which made the front page of the *Bucks Advertiser*, although there was no danger involved. The main problem was that we had to close for the rest of the day to allow the gas to dissipate (in its own time) through the office windows.

## MANORIAL DOCUMENTS REGISTER (MDR)

We have entered into partnership with Berkshire Record Office, The National Archives and Royal Holloway, University of London, on a 2-year project to update and digitise the MDR for the two counties of Buckinghamshire and Berkshire. The project committee is chaired by the distinguished scholar of manorial records Professor P. D. A. Harvey. Funding has been, received from a variety

of backers, including £10,000 from the Marc Fitch Fund and £5,000 from BAS, for which we are extremely grateful.

The MDR is intended to be a comprehensive list of court rolls, surveys, accounts and other records of manors in England and Wales, regardless of where they are held. It has until recently been kept by the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, now part of The National Archives, in the form of a paper index, but much of the information recorded is inadequate and out-of-date. Our project will see the MDR for the two counties updated and re-modelled as web pages searchable by manor, parish and date. Sarah Charlton, one of our archivists, was recruited as the part-time Project Officer and began work in February 2006.

The digitisation of the MDR for England and Wales is a rolling project under the auspices of The National Archives on a county-by-county basis, dependent upon the availability of local support and funding. Some counties have already been completed and to see how the finished project will look, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr).

The BAS has had a long association with manorial records, as its muniment room at the County Museum was for many years the only appointed place of deposit for manorial records in the county. Although the Society's manorial holdings were deposited here in 1987, the collection still contains a majority of our manorial holdings. So far, over 40 archive repositories are known to hold Buckinghamshire manorial documents and more are expected to come to light.

An early indication of the value of this project was that it alerted us to the Quarrendon manorial records in Oxfordshire Record Office, just in time for them to be used and highlighted in the Quarrendon Open Day in September 2006.

## MEDIA AND OUTREACH

The death of Ronnie Barker in October 2005 provoked an unexpected flurry of enquiries from the media, national as well as local, since the actor's theatrical career was launched at the Market Theatre in Aylesbury. As we hold original theatre programmes of the period, we were able to provide a lot of information and Rachel Simon of our local studies library was interviewed on local radio.

In addition to our by now traditional Archives Awareness Open Day in the autumn (please contact

us for details of this year's!), we held a Family History Day in February 2006 to coincide with BBC Television's celebrity genealogy show, 'Who Do You Think You Are?'. A few days earlier BBC Three Counties Radio staged a 2-hour live broadcast from CBS, interviewing a number of our users as well as staff.

The Boarstall Cartulary was loaned to the County Museum for display in their exhibition, 'Getting To Know Bernwood', and the County Archivist gave a gallery talk on the world-famous map of the village of Boarstall, 1444 x 1446, which the cartulary contains.

Members of the Victorian Society were given a tour of the Judges' Lodgings in Aylesbury on the occasion of the bi-centenary of the birth of its architect, Edward Buckton Lamb, in 1805. Identified by H. R. Goodhart-Rendell (not pejoratively!) as one of the 'rogue architects' of the Victorian period for his unorthodox approach to church architecture, Lamb was later to fall foul of Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, who described his work at Hughenden Manor for Benjamin Disraeli as 'High Victorian originality at its most ruthless (and ugly)'. Sadly, Pevsner did not mention the Judges Lodgings in his Buckinghamshire volume in the *Buildings of England* series.

Information was supplied to the Law Commission on the Buckinghamshire Gaol Act of 1736 as part of their scheme for the repeal of obsolete legislation. The purpose of the Act was to enable the county magistrates to levy a rate for the completion of the county gaol on the south side of the Market Square in Aylesbury, started in 1720. We were able confirm that not only had the building been completed but also that the gaol had been demolished in 1849.

#### BUCKINGHAMSHIRE RECORD SOCIETY

Volume 34 of the Record Society's publications, *The Buckinghamshire Eyre of 1286*, edited by Lesley Boatwright, is now available for £30. We have also acquired a number of second-hand copies of out-of-print volumes, which are on sale at £10 each. In addition, the Society's committee has decided to cut the price of all unsold volumes pub-

lished over 10 years ago to £5 each. All volumes can be purchased from us; postage is additional to all these prices.

We are also working with the Record Society on a project to digitise their volumes and mount them on our website, where they can be viewed under 'Buckinghamshire Record Society Online Volumes'.

#### SWOP (SHARING WYCOMBE'S OLD PHOTOGRAPHS)

The SWOP project, based at High Wycombe Study Centre and co-ordinated by our Local Studies Specialist Christine Featherstone, aims to digitise and web-enable some 15,000 photographs of the Wycombe District area currently housed at three different locations: Wycombe Library, Wycombe Museum and the Bucks Free Press. In addition, the project has been offered around 1,300 photographs from the High Wycombe Society's collection and has also received many interesting images from members of the public. An HLF grant of £50,000 was awarded to complete the project by 31 March 2007 and when the website goes live, its address will be [www.buckscc.gov.uk/swop](http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/swop).

Volunteers are cataloguing the photographs using a data collection programme created by one of their number. The information is then transferred to Modes, a database used by the County Museum, and linked to the relevant digitised image. Scanning is being done in-house. The volunteers are mainly local people, many of whom have lived in the Wycombe area for most of their lives. They have all gained considerable knowledge of the history of their town and the surrounding area from this project, and have moreover improved their skills in information technology.

Education and reminiscence packs are also being produced following consultation with schools and elderly persons' day-centres. These will consist of photographs from the project, census copies, maps and any other related material as requested through the consultation process.

Roger Bettridge  
County Archivist

# COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

## REPORT FOR 2005

The main achievements in 2005 were related to the 'Getting to Know Bernwood' and 'Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past' Projects, both funded by the Heritage Lottery. The service reached a complement of six delivering a range of educational and outreach activities on top of continuing work on historic landscape characterisation and the core activities in planning, conservation and the Sites and Monuments Record.

### STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Service completed a report for Aylesbury Vale District and Buckinghamshire County Council on the implications for the historic environment of major long-term growth centred on Aylesbury. The study used historic landscape characterisation alongside information on historic buildings and archaeology to assess the implications of growth in sectors around the town, as well as highlighting opportunities for cultural and green infrastructure.

### DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND CONSERVATION ADVICE

Planning and conservation advice casework involved 551 consultations, of which 170 required positive follow up. The year saw many small-scale evaluations and watching briefs, many of which are reported here in 'Archaeological Notes', and a few more substantial investigations. The most significant results were obtained on the Stoke Hammond/ Linslade Western Bypass where an Iron Age settlement, Roman horticultural trench system and other remains were excavated in advance of construction. The proposed major developments around Aylesbury required the service's continuing involvement, particularly in relation to the protection of two scheduled ancient monuments at Quarrendon and Broughton, both of which pose significant challenges.

This was the first year of the new national Environmental Stewardship grant scheme which provides farmers and landowners with grants for

sensitive management of sites and landscapes. The scheme involves an historic environment strand on which this service gives advice on "higher-tier" applications, but it was disappointing to discover that data supplied to inform the scheme's "lower-tier" was not used due to IT problems at DEFRA.

The Archaeology Service has secured a £10,000 per annum grant from English Heritage to improve management of ancient monuments. Conservation works were undertaken at a medieval moated site in Stewkley. A management plan has been commissioned from Albion Archaeology to address a series of problems relating to tree management and land contamination at Danesfield Camp, Medmenham, a former military base. Applications for future grants would be welcomed from owners of eligible monuments.

### HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISATION (HLC)

A draft report on the English Heritage supported Buckinghamshire HLC Project, has been completed and good progress made on the Chiltern HLC Project, which has now mapped the Oxfordshire Chilterns to complete coverage of the Chiltern AONB. Proposals for a wider Buckinghamshire Environmental Character System, integrating landscape with the historic and natural environment, have been approved for a start in 2006.

### SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD/UNLOCKING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE'S PAST

The Sites and Monuments Record handled 176 enquiries, an almost 20% increase on 2004. Continued investment in the Sites and Monuments Record has been secured through the 'Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past' project. Kim Biddulph, the UBP project officer is working with consultants to produce a web-searchable version of the SMR with special modules aimed at schools, local com-



munity groups and the recreation sector. The County Council is grateful for the invaluable support of the Buckinghamshire Archaeology Society and its members for this project, including participation in focus groups.

#### GETTING TO KNOW BERNWOOD

‘Getting to know Bernwood’ was a community archaeology project linked to the County Council’s wider Bernwood Countryside Initiative. The project involved promoting awareness of the special heritage of the area formerly covered by the medieval Forest of Bernwood, which at its greatest extent stretched from Oxford to Aylesbury and north to Buckingham. It lasted for 18 months delivering a program of 40 walks, talks, hands-on activities and creation of an education resource pack which was sent to local schools and is available on-line.

#### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The successful expansion of the Archaeology Service has enabled us to provide a better and wider range of services than previously providing public benefits along with advice and resources to help landowners manage monuments in a more

sensitive and sustainable way. Historic Landscape Characterisation is helping protect and enhance the best of our historic countryside and ensure that future development is sustainable, particularly by informing the emerging “green infrastructure” agenda. The Solent-Thames Regional Research Framework Project, launched in autumn 2005, will provide a mechanism for systematic review of the current state of knowledge of Buckinghamshire’s historic environment, identifying future research potential and placing the county in a regional context. In the medium term we hope to undertake a characterisation study of Buckinghamshire’s towns to complement HLC’s focus on rural landscapes.

The national Heritage Protection Review, which promises new legislation to simplify heritage designations and consents without reducing protection, had been expected to produce a White Paper but this has been postponed to 2006–7.

*Alexander (Sandy) Kidd  
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Buckinghamshire County Council*

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

# MILTON KEYNES ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE

## REPORT FOR 2005

2005 was another busy year for the Archaeology Service with an increase in workload largely brought about by the demands of the ongoing expansion of Milton Keynes.

### DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

The total number of planning applications received during 2005 was 2022, of which 239 were considered in more detail and 79 had archaeological planning conditions imposed. The 2005 consultation figures show an 8% reduction on 2004. Although there were fewer consultations overall, this was countered by the large areas with some covering in excess of 220 hectares.

During 2005 there were 42 sites on which archaeological or historic building recording works commenced, including 5 excavations. The Iron Age was well represented as on four sites significant remains of this period were encountered. Excavations at Oxley Park and Tattenhoe Park on the west of Milton Keynes revealed small-scale settlement sites with associated enclosures. An excavation north-west of Olney revealed an Iron Age pit alignment, an enigmatic and poorly understood form of landscape division, with a later Iron Age inhumation in one of the silted-up pits. Pre-development works at Renny Lodge, Newport Pagnell uncovered Iron Age features which were succeeded by a small roadside Romano-British settlement. Before excavation work commenced on this site the foundations of the 19th century Union Workhouse were recorded. Finally, industrial archaeological investigations of the Old Wolverton locks were undertaken as part of a grant-funded Milton Keynes Council scheme to improve the access and interpretation of this section of the canal.

### SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD (SMR)

During 2005 the SMR room was used by external researchers 10 times and 10 organisations entered in to licence agreements for SMR information in digital form.

English Heritage funding was secured to conduct

an audit of the Sites & Monuments Record in 2006. This will analyse the range, quantity, and quality of data held and establish a framework for improving the structure of, and access to, the records to achieve the Historic Environment Record benchmark.

Elements of the SMR have been made available online through cooperation with the Milton Keynes Intelligence Team, on the Observatory website (<http://www.mkobservatory.org.uk>). In coming years, it is hoped to expand the amount of archaeological information available through this web site.

### STAFFING

Due to illness in May the provision of the archaeological service was curtailed. Temporary archaeological assistance was bought-in during June to provide cover and a part-time assistant was employed from September until December to assist with the increasing workload due to the Milton Keynes Expansion. Subsequently an English Heritage grant was obtained for an additional full-time post which was filled by Nick Crank on the 3rd January 2006.

### OTHER INITIATIVES

The Senior Archaeological Officer was involved with other curatorial archaeologists in the development of Archaeological Research Strategies for the South-East Region.

Milton Keynes Heritage Association established a small archaeological sub-committee comprising representatives of local archaeological/historical societies, metal detector groups, archaeological contractors, the Finds Liaison Officer and Milton Keynes Archaeological Officers. The group is currently engaged in the production of a website on the archaeology of Milton Keynes.

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