

# Historic Environment Record News

The newsletter of the Historic Environment Records Forum

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## A View from the New Chair

**Nick Boldrini, Yorkshire County Council**

Hello to you all, and belated New Years greetings. I am Nick Boldrini, Historic Environment Record Officer at North Yorkshire County Council. Perhaps rashly, I have volunteered to take over from Neil Lockett as the HER Forum chair, and even more rashly, perhaps, Martin Newman accepted my offer!

Firstly, I would like to thank Neil for the work he has put in over the last two years, and wish him well for the future. I hope I can continue to do as good a job as he has.

Secondly, I should give you some brief biographical details. My background is as a late comer to archaeology, though I have always been interested in history, and studied this as an Undergraduate. I only started my archaeological career in 1995, when I began postgraduate study at Sheffield. It was here I got my first taste of the SMR world as a volunteer at South Yorkshire SMR. After leaving Sheffield, I spent the next few years as a fieldworker, before I managed to get a job

working in Worcestershire SMR in 2000. I have been involved in the curatorial side of the profession ever since, with a brief stint in County Durham, before starting my present post in Autumn 2001.



*New HER Forum Chair Nick Boldrini*

Neil announced he was stepping down at the last HER Forum meeting, which was held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2004 in Leicester, with its themes being Recording Modern Heritage and Digital Archiving. There were presentations from John Schofield on setting priorities for including post war sites in HERs, followed by a useful discussion. A further presentation was by Jo Darke of the Public Monuments and Sculpture Society, who have been very busy by all accounts. The afternoon session focussed on digital aspects of HERs, with a

presentation by William Kilbride of the ADS on digital archiving, and Edmund Lee on the FISH Toolkit, which were both interesting and useful.

I found the last session particularly interesting, as one of the issues we are struggling with in North Yorkshire, is the incorporation of digital data from various sources into the HER. There are various projects running in our area, from Local Heritage Initiative funded Community Archaeology Projects, to Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund funded schemes, all of which are producing useful digital data about the archaeology of the area. Concording this new data with what is already in our system is going to become increasingly an issue for us, and probably for other HERs also.

The continued development of MIDAS and other standards, as witnessed by the recent E – Conference on Archaeological Science data, is also something to keep an eye on, as this will obviously impact on all our workloads.

Anyway, that's enough for now, hope to see many of you at the next meeting.

## **New Team for Heritage Information Partnerships** **Matthew Stiff, English Heritage**

As mentioned elsewhere in HER News, our HIPs Supervisor (and esteemed editor), Martin Newman, is moving on to become Datasets Development Manager for the NMR. We thank him for all the work he has done in support

of HERs and wish him well in his new role.

Following the NMR Review the HIPs team has been strengthened to three posts. Catherine Cayley has been appointed as HIPs Supervisor with special responsibility for working on the Heritage Gateway portal project. Catherine combines an archaeological background with experience of developing and evaluating online content. Nick Davis has been appointed as HIPs Officer and brings with him many years of experience in the archaeology sector (including working for the Greater London SMR when it was attached to the Museum of London).

We will be advertising a second HIPs Supervisor post (Martin's replacement) in the next couple of weeks. Details will be distributed to various lists and will be available online via the EH website. Please feel free to contact me if you are interested and would like an informal discussion,  
[matthew.stiff@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:matthew.stiff@english-heritage.org.uk)

## **An Up-To-Date Record: HERs and the Later Twentieth Century**

**John Schofield, English Heritage**

'It seems wrong to view the later 20th century merely as a pollutant, something that has devalued or destroyed what went before. The process of landscape change – its time depth or 'stratigraphy' – is recognised and celebrated for earlier periods. The

20th century should be no different.' (Bradley et al 2004)

*Change and Creation: historic landscape character 1950-2000* was issued by EH at the end of 2004 (Bradley et al. 2004). In this short discussion paper, we (its five authors) set out reasons why later twentieth century material culture matters, what are its characteristics, and how it could be studied, recorded and understood; it also began the process of determining concepts and methods for managing the legacy of the twentieth century as a whole and for monitoring directions of change. A website – [www.changeandcreation.org](http://www.changeandcreation.org) – invites reaction, ideas and participation. One of the many concerns that this agenda inevitably raises is which buildings and monuments, which places we should record from the later twentieth century, and how we should document twentieth century landscape character. These related questions have particular significance to those responsible for managing Historic Environment Records, which was the reason for presenting a version of this note to the HER Forum at Leicester, December 2004.

### **Assessing the twentieth century historic environment**

Although there were earlier examples, the assessment and in some cases statutory protection of twentieth century buildings and monuments has become almost routine since the beginning of the Monuments Protection Programme (MPP) and Thematic Listing in the late 1980s and early 1990s respectively. An example is the Industrial Archaeology Programme managed as part of the MPP, which included electricity power generation, coal mines, and chemicals for example, all with significant

twentieth century coverage. The listing of post-war buildings has increased in recent years, as part of a programme of work undertaken by EH's listing team (e.g. Cherry 1996). Military heritage has also been a prominent theme, culminating in books about World War II (e.g. Dobinson 2001) and Cold War monuments (e.g. Cocroft and Thomas 2003). The HLF-funded Defence of Britain project is an example of public participation and involvement, with the results now accessible to all on the Archaeology Data Service website. EH's Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and urban characterisation (EUS and UAD) programmes typically include areas that are characteristically twentieth century. HLC in particular involves the study of present day landscape, encapsulating the past within the present, but nonetheless being a picture of how people today perceive landscape.



*Tilbury Power Station © Crown Copyright, NMR ref no AA95/06556*

Whilst these initiatives have created a good foundation for further work, they reflect a rather narrow and selective approach, looking particularly at industrial and military sites. This bias is typical of the first steps into new periods (e.g. the focus on castles and fortifications in early archaeological studies of the medieval and post-medieval periods). But material culture of the later twentieth century is

much more diverse than that, a point highlighted in two recent collections of essays, by Graves Brown (2000) and Buchli and Lucas (2001) and in contributions to the recently established CHAT (Contemporary History and Archaeology in Theory) conference. Graves Brown's collection (2000), for example, seeks to explain how, '[T]he material world around us, the cultural world we have fashioned over thousands of years, is both a product of and a constraint upon all aspects of our societies, our individual psychologies, our beliefs, our understanding of our past and our goals for the future. By its very nature, our material culture is something with which we are all, at first glance, familiar. ... The very familiarity, mundanity of the material world around us leads us to leave it unquestioned.' (Graves Brown 2000, 1). Buchli and Lucas (2001), like Graves Brown, challenge the 'taken for granted' of modern life. They review a diversity of projects, under the thematic headings of production and consumption, remembering and forgetting, and disappearance and disclosure.<sup>1</sup> Also relevant here is the observation that the landscape itself is a later twentieth creation, both in terms of what has survived and why, and its component parts, many of which are later twentieth century additions.

### Research agenda

Some attempt has already been made to produce research

<sup>1</sup> For links to numerous projects researching twentieth century material culture, see [www.changeandcreation.org](http://www.changeandcreation.org). For examples of projects in the United States and Australia, see Slaton and Schiffer (1995) and Jones (2002) respectively.

agendas for aspects of twentieth century material culture (e.g. Schofield 2004). But the questions we could address go far beyond the fairly limited range we have currently. Some examples of what we could be researching through their material culture include:

- Landscapes of in/exclusion - homelessness, security zones, class-based exclusion, exclusion by sexuality and gender, age and disability.
- Boundaries - how have boundaries changed over the course of the twentieth century: rural/urban, brown sites/green sites, public/private, sacred/profane.
- Interstitial landscapes - the spaces between that are not accommodated, that are ignored (eg. 'left-over' urban land tracts, too awkward in size to use, etc.)
- Transient landscapes - landscapes of short-term change or transience such as landscapes of homelessness (again), of events such as festivals, celebrations or political demonstrations.
- Landscapes of migration - engaging with the active role of material culture in the creation of new urban landscapes. Examples include post-Windrush diaspora (e.g. Nevisian landscapes in Leeds; Jamaican landscapes in Bristol); asylum seekers, rural workers, north-south migrations, immigrant communities.
- Transport - degrees of connectivity (that is interconnectedness by mass transit, automobilia, etc.)
- Landscapes and immateriality - virtual landscapes and landscapes which actively deny their materiality - eg the social landscapes and gift

exchanges of online live music trading communities. Where does this leave 'archaeological visibility'? Also to consider the delineation of air rights, bandwidths, radio frequencies, microwaves, radiation, air quality, sewage networks and catchment areas, actuarial catchments/landscapes and soundscapes.

### Future directions

In general, the term historic environment is now broadly defined, and a significantly increased number of HERs no longer recognise cut-off dates (see Table, below). How far this seriously affects 'collecting policy' is another matter however, and as we know for much of the twentieth century, and certainly the period post 1945, HERs often operate thematic cut-offs that almost entirely privilege military and industrial remains.

Cut off date	1945	None
% of SMRs in 1998	29%	15%
in 2002	11%	74%
Change	-18%	+59%

[Source: Newman 2002]

However, from the experience of recording twentieth century military sites over the past ten years, through MPP research and the Defence of Britain project, it would clearly be unreasonable and unrealistic (and arguably unnecessary) to embark on a concerted programme of recording all twentieth century buildings, sites and monuments. There is also the point that all HERs would be starting from different positions: some have recorded much already, while others have barely started. What would be more reasonable – in addition to *Change and Creation* and other HLC programmes – would be to develop guidance on

best practice. This was largely the reason for my presentation at Leicester; to seek views and advice on how this might be achieved, and what form it might take.

Now that most HERs have a GIS base, or are connected in some way to a county- or authority-wide GIS, there are various sources to draw upon in recognising and understanding twentieth-century monuments and impacts at landscape scale. HLC is one example, but there are others. Most county-wide Geographical Information Systems will have a layer of information related to transport routes and infrastructure for example, and provided these could be consulted, data gathering and digitising would be an unnecessary duplication. The same is true of new development. In Milton Keynes this is generally included now as a layer within the HER; other authorities will hold this digital data elsewhere. Finally, recent aerial photographic cover will include information on developments of all kinds, and at local and landscape scale.



Milton Keynes © English Heritage, NMR ref no NMR 18693/02

Linked to the issue of dealing with the later twentieth-century legacy, because it derives from a period to which living memory and association still apply, is the question of how to understand those areas of activity that impact

more on people's everyday lives and experience, and on memory and sense of place<sup>2</sup>. All of these places matter, and are a matter of concern for archaeologists and curators, yet they are virtually unrepresented in HERs. This is therefore a second area that needs to be considered, the link between place and memory. Later twentieth-century places retain significant memories for people. How should these memories be recorded, if at all? Is this something that can be accommodated through online HERs, perhaps as two separate records: one for people to add personal memories and reaction to sites already on the HER; and another for people to contribute their own places, and to contribute a narrative? There are a few examples of work that might be starting to point the way.

Terminology is another area for more work. For industrial and military heritage, the various Step reports (for industrial sites) and CBA reports combined with the Defence of Britain Handbook (for military) provide a definitive terminology, for fieldwork and curators. But how we describe everything else, and ensure our use of terms is consistent, requires guidance. A recent book by Dolores Hayden (2004) does this for a selection of peri-urban landscapes in the United States, creating categories such as Manufactured housing, Privatopia and Sitcom suburb. Something similar might help HERs to come to terms with the wealth and complexity of the later twentieth-

<sup>2</sup> Increasingly there is an awareness of the point made by place theoretician Yi-Fu Tuan, that the perception of significance in places need not be measured by objective, definable characteristics, and that 'deeply loved places are not necessarily visible' (1977, 178).

century historic environment: an illustrated thesaurus is proposed, with a hierarchy of terms that can be developed as research progresses. A first possible structure for such a hierarchy is presented here (see online at [www.jiscmail.ac.uk/files/HERFORUM/20th\\_C\\_thesaurus.doc](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/files/HERFORUM/20th_C_thesaurus.doc)), arranged in nested layers with Themes, Aspects, Types and Sub-types (themselves perhaps subdivided). The first two columns are complete; the rest must await further fieldwork and research.



Scroby Sands Wind Farm, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk © English Heritage, NMR ref no NMR 23436/32

### Finally ...

As we all know, the end of the twentieth century should not serve as a cut-off, any more than 1945 should have done. The historic environment continues to change, with new landscapes, monuments and building types being created, often at the expense of the old. One of the main points of *Change and Creation* is to recognise that this process of ongoing change will just as often be a process of creation as of loss or destruction. Studying and acknowledging the interest and significance of extremely recent heritage helps us to avoid seeing everything new as destructive, or the past as some idyllic state better than the present. Like the Power of Place agenda, like the emerging 'future

landscape' movement, doing the archaeology of the later twentieth-century is about living with change, not necessarily always struggling against it. It is about being prepared to study change for its own sake.

We would welcome any comments on this contribution, or on the *Change and Creation* document. These comments can be directed to me personally, or via the Change and Creation website:

[www.changeandcreation.org](http://www.changeandcreation.org).

### Acknowledgement

This contribution is largely the result of discussion with others involved with the Change and Creation Booklet (listed under Bradley et al. in the references, below), and in particular Graham Fairclough who commented on an earlier draft of this note. The text is an amended version of that given to the HER Forum at Leicester, December 2004.

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## An Archaeological Environment Inventory for Kosovo

Birte Brugmann and Gjejlane Hoxha

The fertile plateau of Kosovo became extensively settled in the Neolithic Period, and in the Iron Age began to profit from mining activities in the bordering mountains. As an important passage across the Western Balkans, the region has produced and attracted wealth through the ages but has also been the subject of small- and large-scale conflicts.



*The hillfort of Gradevci (centre,) © Birte Brugmann*

Today, Kosovo is mostly known for NATO intervention against an ethnic cleansing campaign by the Serbian government against Kosovo-Albanians in 1999. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the democratic Kosovan institutions created after the war are faced with the difficult task of rebuilding the region, which includes the integrated conservation of its rich cultural heritage.



*Traditional house destroyed in the war, © Birte Brugmann*

An inventory of the architectural heritage was started as early as 1999. With the help of international organisations remarkable achievements have been made in regard to the conservation and reconstruction of buildings in particular in town centres. The legislation and infrastructure needed to deal with administrative procedures such

as planning permission for housing developments and urban planning, however, is not yet fully developed. Part of the landscape has been spoilt by urban sprawls and dispersed settlement in rural areas.



*Urban sprawl of Pristina, © Birte Brugmann*

In 2000, the Kosovo Museum and the Institute of Archaeology of Albania started work on an 'Archaeological Map' of Kosovo with the aim of giving an overview of all known sites. In 2004, the newly founded Kosovo Institute of Archaeology has taken the lead on the project and plans to finish the survey this summer with a record of more than 1,500 sites and monuments. An important aspect is the integrative approach taken to the survey, which includes archaeological evidence irrespective of claims being laid to types of sites or monuments as the heritage of specific ethnic groups.



*Plough damage at Ulpiana, © Birte Brugmann*

Adapting and maintaining this paper archive for the needs of integrated conservation is

presently beyond the means of the Kosovo Institute for the Protection of Monuments. The Heritage Division of the Kosovan Ministry for Culture, Youth and Sports has therefore initiated a project that aims at the procurement and implementation of an Archaeological Environment Inventory for Kosovo. Following advice from the National Monuments Record of English Heritage, funding is being sought for adapting HER software to Kosovan needs and for training Kosovan archaeologists in the creation and maintenance of HERs in Britain.



*Kosovo Museum in Pristina, © Birte Brugmann*

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## **Sculptures and Monuments – Symbols and Histories: The National Recording Project**

**Jo Darke, Public Monuments and Sculpture Association**

The National Recording Project is a survey of all the public sculptures and monuments in Britain, recorded on a database and partially available on the web

- also as volumes in the series entitled *Public Sculpture of Britain*, published by the Liverpool University Press. These are rapidly gaining in reputation and distinction: the eighth volume, *Public Sculpture of Greater Manchester*, was launched from the Great Hall of Manchester Town Hall last October, 2004. The book has won the prestigious Portico Prize for the best book of the year on local history.



Statue of Wellington in Piccadilly, Manchester, English Heritage, NMR ref no CC78/00236

The NRP is the largest and most ambitious project of the PMSA, which is a small charity funded by membership subscription (but running on good will and enthusiasm), whose aims are to preserve and promote public sculpture and monuments. These objects – deemed within the PMSA to be 'anything sculptural, and/or commemorative, within the public eye' – can include sculptures as works of art; freestanding statues; sculptural groups; commemorative obelisks, columns, clock towers, fountains, belvederes, wayside markers and other varieties of memorial or adornment. Architectural sculpture is an important element in this body of work. Commemorative buildings, such as hospitals or libraries, are disallowed, being features predominantly of architectural interest – and being too utilitarian

where statues and monuments are, by their nature and purpose, symbolic. The period covered runs roughly from the Stuart period to the present day, but includes the surviving thirteenth-century Eleanor Crosses.

The PMSA was founded in 1991, and came about through research, carried out from 1987-91, for a popular book on statues and monuments. At that time there was no national record or catalogue, although each of the major cities had drawn up some sort of list of statues and monuments within its boundary. The identification of suburban and rural sites was possible only by trawling local history sections of county museums and libraries, and some county record offices – Cheshire, Somerset and Wiltshire were particularly helpful – and then finding the one person lurking in any of these institutions who was devoted to this peculiar subject. Every county had one such, and their enthusiasm combined with generosity allowed me to gather personal inventories for all of England (and Wales). In addition I was fortunate, from early on, to have the advice of Ian Leith whose personal inventory, which had national coverage, became a fantastic source and check list.

To learn about the subject I visited about 95% of all major sites in England and Wales, metropolitan, rural and wilderness – and numerous minor examples en route. Four years and some hundreds of miles later, it was clear that this was a national collection of astonishing diversity in scale and quality, with examples ranging from Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square, to a statue of a small dog sitting on a cushion – commemorated as "the constant companion of Charles

Wicksteed" at Wicksteed Park, near Towcester in Northants.

It was also clear that the nation seemed to be in the grip of a new enthusiasm for putting up new works of art or commemoration. My theory is that this is part of a search for identity on the part of localities whose previous industries have declined, and which have succumbed to the soulless road schemes and concrete office blocks of the post-war era. The loss of the vernacular in building and architecture means a loss of distinguishing characteristics, and now an enthusiasm for replacing these regional features, or for beautifying or distinguishing the surroundings, has begun to take hold. Interestingly, although many of these symbolic works break new boundaries in terms of contemporary art, they are predominantly rooted in bygone industries, achievements and personalities of their locale.



*Public sculpture by David Mach using K6 telephone kiosks in Kingston Upon Thames. © Crown copyright, NMR ref no BB99/00099*

At the same time, the diverse collection of existing works is prone to neglect and decay. This seems to be because they are difficult to designate and so – practically and metaphorically – they become as good as invisible. They are structures, but not utilitarian, although they can form part of a utilitarian structure, like a library or museum carrying

architectural sculptures of great thinkers. They might be classed as street furniture, except that one cannot think of a small, 19th-century stone profile of Charles the second, situated by a stream in the middle of a Yorkshire grouse moor, as street furniture. They get in the way of traffic schemes and planning projects and so are removed from their original location, where they had some meaning, and are relegated at best to the local park, at second best to council storage and at worst to motorway infill. But perhaps by their very invisibility and non-utilitarianism, these symbolic objects, which seem to fill the gap between archaeology and architecture, have more significance than we think. They have no use other than to represent people and events which, as can be seen in recent history, can often be a representation of overweening power of a particular regime. This is why, when regimes eventually fail, the most powerful image the press can come up with is the toppling of statues – symbols of dread, whose toppling is symbolic of freedom. All this has been vividly demonstrated through the press since formation of the PMSA.

The PMSA came about when, following four years of travel and writing, and now with a strong concern for the survival of the structures under scrutiny, I invited Ian Leith and two other colleagues to join forces to form the PMSA. The first meeting in October, 1990 took place very soon after the dismantling and theft of a monument beside the A1, just south of Peterborough – a bronze figure of an Imperial Eagle on a column, commemorating the Entente Cordiale and occupying the site of a former Napoleonic Prisoner of

War Camp where prisoners of many nations lived and perished in the early 19th century. (As a Trustee of the Peterborough Eagle Appeal, which is largely run by local residents and includes one or two national or international societies, I can now report that 15 years after the theft, the toppled column having been restored, a bronze eagle newly sculpted by John Doubleday will be ceremonially reinstated on 2 April 2005.) The demise of this internationally, nationally and locally symbolic waymark focused our minds on the nature and problems associated with public monuments, and the urgent need for their protection and promotion through a group like the PMSA.



*Bronze relief sculpture panel depicting Vulcan on the Green Lane Works, Sheffield. © English Heritage, NMR ref no AA022488*

The major projects of the PMSA are far from symbolic. All are practical in aim and undertaking. We publish the *Sculpture Journal*, which is an internationally respected scholarly journal focused on sculpture of all periods from the late medieval. Early on we published a conservation leaflet to assist local authorities in finding ways of providing regular maintenance within low budgets – this, as part

of an ongoing campaign to encourage good practice in maintenance and conservation. We also campaign for a greater awareness amongst the statutory bodies, particularly in terms of listing status, planning matters and so on, of the unsung value to a neighbourhood of its public sculpture. We are currently running a campaign called Save our Sculpture, which aims to involve local people in keeping watch on their statues and monuments, and encourages them to report any perceived damage or risk. We are about to launch the Custodians Handbook, which is an information manual for families or individuals inheriting works, documentation or memorabilia from deceased sculptors. Most recently, to encourage popular interest in the subject, we have embarked on an annual award for excellence in public sculpture. This is in collaboration with the Marsh Christian Trust, which will provide the funding for the award whilst the PMSA administers the project. Also to encourage public awareness, we stage sculpture lectures and walks, and collaborate in conferences and seminars.

All of these projects and campaigns, whilst being part-funded by grants from institutions and individuals, rely heavily on many hours of volunteer output. They are mostly collaborative projects, involving individuals and also cultural institutions like the Henry Moore Institute, the Tate Archive, the Royal British Society of Sculptors and others. Chief of these collaborative undertakings is the National Recording Project (NRP). It was initiated through the PMSA Advisory Panel, because it was felt that in setting up its aim to protect and promote public sculptures and monuments, the



PMSA needed to know exactly what sculptures and monuments it was aiming to protect and promote. So the idea of the survey was born.

This was in 1992, one year after inauguration of the PMSA. Some of us were still using Amstrads - and we had no inkling of the tremendous impact that the fast developing world of IT was having, or would have, on surveys like the one we proposed. Neither had we any idea of the way in which the PMSA would develop into an organisation requiring time and application in administration. This is to say that we have been overtaken by events, and have not been in a position to keep pace with the developing technicalities, or even the language, of electronic information. This has been an abiding weakness, against many balancing strengths, of the NRP.

Despite this, the NRP now consists of a database containing records and many images of almost 10,000 sites, covering 60 percent of Britain - that is, all of Wales, a bit of Scotland, and much of England. Of these, the database records almost 700 sites listed grade one- or grade two-starred, and some 2000 sites listed grade two. This includes free-standing statues and other commemorative structures, plus architectural sculpture on a listed building. One anomaly of the listing system is that a sculpture that might be deemed worthy is highly unlikely to be listed if the building it occupies is commonplace - in other words if an undistinguished building is to be demolished, the sculptures, however rare and beautiful, are counted as part of the building, and cannot be secured by being listed.

The listed status of a sculpture or monument is one of the fields on the Survey form issued by the PMSA to NRP data gatherers. Since this is another collaborative project, the data gatherers - either paid research assistants, or volunteers - are recruited by institutions up and down the country who have agreed to host an NRP Regional Archive Centre (RAC). These institutions are mainly universities - new, redbrick or old - and there are two city museums and a school of art. One RAC is even located at the design studio of the RAC Organiser.

The NRP started with a nucleus of five RACs, where an institution had agreed to provide £5,000 as well as practical hospitality to researchers surveying the cities where they were located - these were Liverpool, Leicester, Glasgow, Newcastle and Bristol. The PMSA set up an administrative structure which required each RAC to establish a day-to-day working group consisting at least of the overall organiser and one or more researchers. The organiser was likely to be a paid member of staff, say a lecturer, whilst the researcher would be a paid assistant or a volunteer. The RAC was also directed to convene a committee of interested experts, such as local historian, art historian, architect, and so on. This committee was to meet to review progress once or twice a year, and its members were asked to be available for consultation at any reasonable time. It was considered mandatory to include a local conservation or planning officer. Each RAC was asked to appoint a representative to sit on the NRP Management Committee, which would meet regularly to oversee

the overall administration of the NRP.

In practical terms, each RAC was issued with survey forms, written guidance on eligibility, interpretation and so on, and was given personal instruction on data gathering and form filling, and on lists of sources, and other assistance. The RAC was also required to return a quarterly progress form to the National Archive Centre (NAC), which by now was based at the Courtauld Institute of Art, and it was requested to sign a Letter of Agreement, setting out financial and working arrangements to the mutual satisfaction of the host institution and the PMSA. Much of this structure was originated by, or in consultation with, the PMSA archivists Ian Leith, and another PMSA founder member Catherine Moriarty, who was then Co-ordinator of the National Inventory of War Memorials (established 1989).



*Battle of Britain memorial at Capel-le-Ferne, Kent. © Crown copyright, NMR ref no 258H/27*

Interestingly enough, in 1997, when the PMSA was awarded a half-million pound grant for development of the NRP, the Heritage Lottery Fund required much the same administrative structure as had already been set up. In addition it required each of the nine new, and newly-affordable, RACs to arrange for the future housing and protection of any resulting archive that might be at risk in the event of the host

institution, or department, undergoing change or closure. The required housing and protection was to be sought from city libraries and museums, and county record offices. This grant was the key to our expanding the NRP from a pilot project to a major project nationwide.

Innocent as the PMSA then was of matters electronic, no significant budget had been allowed for design and construction of a database to contain the information to be gathered through this organisation. We were incredibly fortunate in having as a member a student, Jeremy Beach, whose skill and enthusiasm, generosity and hard graft led him to provide us with a working database shell that could be issued to each new institution taking on a regional archive centre. This was designed as closely as possible to reflect the format of the three survey forms which were already in use, and which had been initially devised by the Leith and Moriarty team, and later fine-tuned by Ian Leith. These forms were SF1 (Survey Form); BR1 (Biographical Research Form – for sculptors' biographies); and OR1 (Object Research Form – for further research on the history of the object under survey).

The main survey form of the three – the SF1 – is intended for research on site and from existing records, and it catalogues the core data of the object under review - that is basic details such as name, title or basic description, location, including civil parish; form, material, maker or makers, commission details, ownership, condition details, listed status and so on. This requires skill in scrutinising an object in its entirety, whether a statue on a pedestal, or a statue on a pedestal in an architect-designed

garden which forms part of the monument: the inscription must be recorded in upper and lower case as appears on the monument, and with any missing letters or spelling irregularities faithfully recorded. A signature on a trailing hem might well go unnoticed, especially if the light is coming from behind: the guidelines give practical tips, such as the need for a light pair of binoculars, or a clear plastic bag for the survey form in case of rain. The SF1 should be accompanied by two pull-down forms, one of which gives object or sub-object type, and the other giving roles - such as sculptor, ceramicist, assistant or architect - or qualifiers. These might be, as for example on Worcester and Birmingham's bronzes of Queen Victoria, Thomas Brock - Sculptor(s) - (Original); or, William Bloye - Sculptor(s) - (Copy). The Biographical and Object Research forms, for archival research, are simpler than the SF1 but are more finely focussed on the one aspect, and are for more in-depth investigation of the object under review.



*Family Group by Henry Moore, Harlow, Essex. © English Heritage, NMR ref no AA98/06947*

As has been said, the range in scale, form and quality of these objects is bewildering and the

SF1 has had to be devised to accommodate information of this diversity in one single document. In doing this, for instance, Ian Leith discovered 90 variant forms of cross, each with a specific definition and title, not all agreed by the higher authorities on this particular commemorative accessory ... this is when we bottled out of drawing up a thesaurus. One discovery that I made, in test-driving the SF1, was whilst trying to describe a monument to Lord Lister by Thomas Brock, one of four monuments located along the centre of Great Portland Street. It comprises an architectural structure which carries a bust of Lister and is fronted by an ideal full-length sculpture of mother and child. There is a cartouche on each of three sides, bearing an inscription, together with many other accessories. On stepping back thankfully, having completed the form at length and in copious detail, I noticed that the lamp standards and bollards accompanying this particular monument were of the same metal as the monument itself - but quite different from the others in the street. They were also located on the same distinctive stone base as the monument. Back to the Survey Form.

The current status of the NRP is similar to its early beginnings, where interested institutions are being persuaded to set up Regional Archive Centres under their own local funding. We have completed the areas contracted in the HLF grant, and are slowly developing the new, self-funded RACs in remaining regions such as the South-East of England and West Yorkshire. The NRP database is under urgent review. It needs a major upgrade to bring it up to present-day standards and expectations of user-

friendliness, and we are seeking grants and funding to carry out this excessively costly exercise. The archive as a whole consists of raw data on objects that date mainly from the 1840s, but with earlier exceptions. This is congruent with the standards observed by English Heritage on such aspects as administrative boundaries, listed building status and so on. Much of the information contained can be gained from the web – otherwise it is free to the general public from the main database and from NRP volunteer personnel. If images or quotations are reproduced we ask only that the PMSA NRP should be clearly credited.

Should we succeed in developing this resource, the NRP will continue to record changes to existing sites, and the appearance of new sites, as a living catalogue of a rapidly developing environmental phenomenon – which now encompasses materials like neon or straw, and concepts such as sculptures from the living willow, that are quite at odds with the Victorian or Edwardian idea of a man on a stand. This will bring fresh headaches to local authorities, who are mainly responsible for the upkeep of public art, from the earliest to the most contemporary examples. We feel that, if the NRP achieves its aims, it will be of significant assistance to conservation and planning officers, as well as to educationists, researchers and writers, the field of tourism and the general enthusiast. As such, it seems clear to us that such a resource cannot indefinitely remain in the hands of an organisation staffed by one full-time volunteer and funded by subscriptions from a membership of around 200.

Indeed, we would argue that such an endeavour is not the responsibility of a small charity, but needs to be undertaken by the statutory bodies as part of the nation's living heritage – not a static phenomenon, but a dynamic continuum. To this end, as well as seeking ways of developing and upgrading it, we are seeking a permanent home for the NRP where it can receive long-term updating and maintenance.

Until then, we are open to suggestions as to caring for the National Recording Project archive. If there are any possible ways we might collaborate, or could be of mutual assistance, we would be grateful if you would let us know. If this has brought into sharper focus a part of the scenery that presently occupies part of the background - that is what the PMSA is about.

## PastScape Launch

### Martin Newman, English Heritage

The NMR launched PastScape in November, prior to which it was only available as a prototype. PastScape gives access to around 400,000 of the NMR's records of archaeological sites, historic buildings and finds.



*The front page of the PastScape website.*

The site is likely to prove useful to HERs for their own research and as an additional resource to which they can direct their users. The

NMR welcomes feedback to help improve the web site and the information it contains. PastScape can be accessed at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/pastscape](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/pastscape) and compliments the NMR's other online resources such as Images of England and Viewfinder.

## A Decade of Digital Preservation

**William Kilbride, Assistant Director, Archaeology Data Service**



The ADS was established in 1996, so as we start 2005 we reflect on what has changed in the last decade. Many of the changes - especially Internet technologies – are easily recognisable, but perhaps the most important area of development has been the least visible. The decade has seen a radical transformation in digital preservation.

Readers of HER Forum news are familiar with the problems of digital preservation, either through celebrated cases, or through their own experience. Preservation works best when creators of digital resources anticipate a future audience and inheritors of digital resources actively curate them. Planning for re-use is a simple slogan, but in the digital age that planning has to start at the point of data creation, not at the end of a project as happens with conventional archives. We are familiar with the reasons to preserve. Grant-giving agencies presume digital preservation, or like UNESCO, have adopted digital preservation as a flagship issue. These pressures confirm

good practice among researchers: data is handed on because that is what good researchers do - either to aid further research, or to ensure information-based management.

Less familiar are the subtle and practical developments in digital preservation over the last ten years. It has become fashionable to describe any website or file server as a 'digital archive' but a decade of research means we now know what a digital archive should look like: and it is activity-based not a file store or webserver. The Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model describes the processes that need to be carried out by a digital archive, processes refined by the Research Library Group which has outlined the characteristics of a 'trusted digital repository'. The Digital Preservation Coalition has had notable successes in raising the problem among politicians, while the Digital Curation Centre offers practical and effective advice.

Outwardly the ADS has been concerned with data creators, providing tools like OASIS, the Guides to Good Practice and a vast number of workshops. Less visibly, our own working practices have been the subject of continued refinement and documentation. The resulting audit trail provides a basis for quality assurance. Concomitant issues continue to be refined. A robust rights management framework has been developed, while we can model more accurately the long-term costs of preservation - which are insignificant to the costs of not preserving. Simultaneously we have begun to understand the users of digital archives, and how different sorts of resource elicit different types of user behaviour. In real terms, digital preservation

at the ADS has gone from theory into practice.

There are two ways in which this work can be deployed to support HERs. On one hand, those who are looking to develop preservation services can draw upon our expertise. On the other, we can provide advice to HERs on the sorts of file formats they should request of contractors. Consequently, and partly in response to requests from participants at the most recent HER-forum, ADS with partners are soon to produce a simple guide to file formats and documentation which HERs should seek from fieldworkers. Watch this space for more news on this short practical guide.

Digital preservation in the next ten years will move from theory into practice. Let's make sure HERs lead the way.

## The FISH Interoperability Toolkit: Now Its Here, How Do You Use It?

Edmund Lee English Heritage

My paper summarised the existing problems of moving data from one dataset to another. Importing records from the Public Monuments and Sculptures Association into you're HER, for example. It then presented the practical steps that HERs need to undertake to start making use of the Interoperability Toolkit.

The problems that HER officers face were documented by the project user needs survey during 2004. Table 1 identifies the

problems listed as 'major' by respondents:

36%	Insufficient time
28%	Concordance work needed
27%	Concerns over content standard
25%	Quality and currency
15%	Indexing terminology
13%	Lack of IT support

Table 1. % citing listed barrier to interoperability as 'major'. Source: FISH Toolkit User Needs analysis August 2004.

The FISH Interoperability Toolkit solution is based on existing FISH standards. The key components are MIDAS XML a 'neutral' format to carry the data a Data Validator to check MIDAS XML files for content (Level 1 Benchmark) and INSCRIPTION terminology Both are available online at [www.heritage-standards.org](http://www.heritage-standards.org) as development drafts. They will receive their official launch on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005 at the IFA conference.

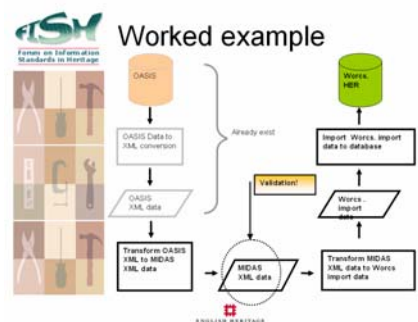


Fig. 1 Example of migration stages

A worked example (fig 1 above) illustrates the stages in a test migration of data. It is based on real-world data structures from OASIS data and Worcestershire. HER event records. It should be stressed that this represents one way to tackle the problem. Each HER will need to design a specific solution that works for their database.



Edmund Lee presenting the FISH Interoperability Toolkit in Leicester

One specific point is that this approach assumes that the intention is to copy records from one database to another. This is the way most data exchange has been undertaken in the past. However, the Toolkit also includes protocols for the machine to machine communication of records ('Web services' in the jargon), which may well become more significant in the future.

## HER Session at IFA

Martin Newman, English Heritage

The topic of HERs will return to the IFA Conference this year, at Winchester, with its own session for the first time since Brighton in 2000. with a title of *What a Difference a Year Makes Recent developments in Historic Environment Records*, the session will focus on recent developments and how the challenges associated with making HER more than just a name are being addressed. The

session has been jointly sponsored by EH and ALGAO and the programme is as follows:

**Introduction - What a Difference a Year Makes** – Martin Newman, (English Heritage)

**HERO or Villein? - The ALGAO Vision for Historic Environment Records** – Paul Gilman (Essex County Council) and Ken Smith (Peak District National Park Authority)

**Old Wine in New Bottles?** – David Baker, Gill Chitty and Rachel Edwards

**From SMR to HER: a model for the development of Historic Environment Records** – Victoria Bryant (Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service)

**Chaos and Order - Variations in SMR and HER records - the Consultants view.** – Neil Macnab (Archaeological Consultant, Scott Wilson)

**Reaching Out: Widening Access to Somerset's HER** – Chris Webster and Talya Bagwell (Somerset County Council)

**A Beginner's Guide to Preserving Digital Resources in Historic Environment Records (HERs)** – Catherine Hardman (Archaeology Data Service)

**How to be a HERO – Developing the SMRs into HERs in Wales** – Marion Manwaring (Archeoleg Cambria Archaeology/Dyfed Archaeological Trust) and Jeff Spencer (Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust)

Full abstracts for the papers can be found on the IFA's website [www.archaeologists.net](http://www.archaeologists.net)

I hope you'll agree it looks an interesting list and I look forward to seeing as many of you there that can make it.

## And Finally.... A word from the Editor

Martin Newman, English Heritage

It is not without some sadness that I have to announce that this will be the last issue of HER News I am responsible for putting together. Editing HER News has been an enjoyable task and as I look back over the five issues (and the proceeding issues of SMR News) I'm surprised by the range of topics that it has covered. The publication itself has gone from black and white photocopied and stapled pages sent out in the post to the fully digital publication you see today. Similarly articles have grown in depth and the publication increasing has the feel of a journal about it.



*Cheers!*

As you will have seen from Matthew Stiff's article on staff changes earlier I am moving on to pastures new within the HER taking up quite a demanding new position as Datasets Development Manager. I have also enjoyed working with the HER community and look forward to dealing with many of you in my new capacity.

Coming as this does at the same time as a new chair for the Forum I'm sure there will be many changes. I would imagine my successor will bring his own style as editor and I wish him or her every success.

## News in Brief



### Publications

*Unlocking Our Past*, EH and ALGAO's replacement for the HLF's 1999 guidance *Unlocking Britain's Past*. Available at [www.jiscmail.ac.uk/files/HERFORUM/Unlocking Our Past.pdf](http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/files/HERFORUM/Unlocking_Our_Past.pdf)

*Listing Is Changing*, an explanation of the changes which will take place in April, available from EH, product code 51031.

*Geoarchaeology, Using Earth Sciences to Understand the Archaeological Record*. available from EH, product code 50848.

*Change and Creation: historic landscape character 1950-2000*

*Licensed to Sell, The History and Heritage of the Public House* by Geoff Brandwood, Andrew Davison and Michael Slaughter. Available from English Heritage price £14.99.



### People

Chris Dyer has joined the Humber SMR as their new Development Control Assistant.

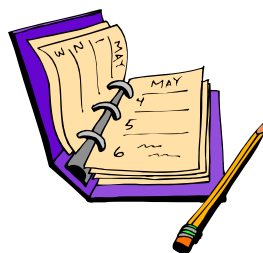
Elizabeth Rowe is the new SMR Officer for Greater Manchester, she was previously working for Babtie Group.

Peter McCrone has moved from Lancashire County Council to DEFRA where he will be the new Advisor(Historic Environment) for the north west region

Bob Sides will be leaving Bath at the start of April to take up a post as Heritage Manager for North Yorkshire County Council, responsible for archaeology, building conservation, ecology and landscape and countryside advice.

Sean O'Reilly has been appointed as the director of IHBC.

Ed Dickinson will be leaving North East Lincolnshire to take up a new role as Historic Environment Team Leader at West Sussex County Council.



### Diary

23<sup>rd</sup> March  
Historic Environment Sources on the Web, ADS.

16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> March  
Public Enquiry Workshop, Oxford University Dept. Continuing Education.

21<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March  
Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA) Tomar, Portugal,  
[www.caa2005.ipt.pt/Intro.htm](http://www.caa2005.ipt.pt/Intro.htm)

22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March  
IFA Conference, Winchester  
[www.archaeologists.net/modules/i\\_content/index.php?page=18](http://www.archaeologists.net/modules/i_content/index.php?page=18)

20<sup>th</sup> May

Planning and the Historic Environment, Oxford University Dept. Continuing Education.

June  
HER Forum Summer Meeting, date and venue to be confirmed.



### Jobs

NMR jobs:

- Data Team Officers, x2, Swindon
- GIS & Mapping Team Officers x2, Swindon.
- Teritorial Co-ordinators, Bristol and Cambridge.

All posts c.£17,117 per annum, closing date 4<sup>th</sup> March.

To be advertised shortly: (HIPS) Heritage Information Partnerships Supervisor.

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