

# Digging deep

**NCMD**  
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR METAL DETECTING



All the latest news from the National Council for Metal Detecting

ISSUE 10

## NEWS

# New Keeper of Prehistory and Europe

Dr Roger Bland has been appointed Keeper of Prehistory and Europe at the British Museum. He will take up his new role from 23 July 2012, and will remain as Keeper of Portable Antiquities and Treasure. The NCMD wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate Roger on his new appointment.

It is hoped that there will be a merging of the two departments, which may also require a new name for the joint department; however there will be consultation

with staff of both departments before this takes place, perhaps also some reassurances for finders on any perceived conflict between Treasure and the new department and clarification on any changes in the way Treasure and the PAS will be administered but Roger notes that it should be possible to provide finders with a better service for Treasure finds by streamlining the process for writing reports for coroners.

One thing is certain however, the spectre of future funding issues for



Dr Roger Bland

the PAS may well have been put to rest with its inclusion within a British Museum department.

**Trevor Austin**

# Robin & Karolyn Hatt Memorial Trophy Competition

With the date for the next meeting of the National Council fixed for November 4, it is time for me to start thinking of the Robin and Karolyn Hatt Competition, to be held on that day.

All over the country, clubs will hold their annual club heats to determine the best coin, artefact and hoard, all previous winners in the monthly club competitions. Winners go forward to the regional heats, then

on to the final judging in November. All entries must have been found in the previous year, 2011.

As before we extend the facility for clubs on the Central Register and Individual Members to post their entries on our own Forum, allowing one week for everyone to cast their vote, thus making sure no-one is left out.

I intend to accept on-line entries around mid-September, so please



check the Forum at this time for details. Please ensure all descriptions are correct, as I can only use what I am given on an entry form.

I look forward to once again organising the competition, however, when I begin to see the entries coming in, I usually turn a shade of bright green!

Please contact me if you have any questions.

**Hilary Fagen**  
Competition Manager  
01253 312176  
alex182sa@blueyonder.co.uk



## CONTENTS

- P1-2** NCMD News
- P3** Retail Prices of Antiquities
- P4** Contaminated Green Waste Update
- P6** What to do when you find Treasure Part 2
- P12-16** Regional News

the **searcher**

3 issues for £8.75  
only by Direct Debit

Call 01778 392036  
Email: [subscriptions@warnersgroup.co.uk](mailto:subscriptions@warnersgroup.co.uk)

APRIL 2012 £3.95

**Treasure hunting**

WIN £1000

Britain's best-selling metal detecting magazine contains a wealth of information about this fascinating hobby.

CALL 01376 521900 (9-5pm)  
ORDER ONLINE  
[www.treasurehunting.co.uk](http://www.treasurehunting.co.uk)

NCMD Newsletter Manager: Trevor Austin  
Publisher: Editor, Design & Layout:  
Harry Bain, Searcher Publications Ltd  
Typesetting, Production and Repro:  
Tradeset Ltd  
Printed and Distributed by:  
Warners Midlands PLC, West Street,  
Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PH.

# BNFM welcomed at Tourism Event

*Following on from our meeting with the Bulgarian Federation of Metal Detecting (BNFM) and the subsequent meeting between the NCMD and Professor Nikolay Nenov and Madam Nenova, the BNFM has sent this report of a recent event in Bulgaria.*

On May 8 and 9 in Ruse our Federation participated in an exhibition weekend Tourism Fair. It is thanks to Professor Nikolay Nenov from the Historical Museum in Rousse for inviting the BNFM.

The BNFM visit was at the invitation of the Director of the Regional Historical Museum Ruse Professor Nikolay Nenov and association 'European Spaces 21'. The event was held on the 9-11 May under the patronage of the Mayor of Ruse Mr Plamen Stoilov with the Ministry of Economy and Energy.



We were presented with an award for the activities of the federation and the relationship built up between our hobby, tourism and the economy of our country. Mrs Nenova reserved us the best place in the hall for our pavilion, which attracted large members of the public.

The Pavilion of the BNFM attracted much interest in demonstrations of detectors. The two machines used were Bulgarian – Golden Mask and Pirate and we issued leaflets for shops, BNFM leaflets and our magazine 'Imperio'.

For visitors to the pavilion we had constructed a special game, a makeshift green panel simulating a lawn, the objective was to find a hidden coin. The prize was a silver tetra drachma. The Deputy Minister of Economy and Tourism Mr Ivo Marinov, who came to the stand also attempted to find the coin.

President of the Federation Iliya Iliev gave a presentation, which focuses on the relationship of detecting, tourism and the role and benefits of the hobby for the economy of Bulgaria.

Both Professor Nikolay and Madam Nenova are extremely supportive of the federation and made us extremely welcome. No one in Bulgaria has afforded us the same welcoming so far. It gives us great hope for the future!

I wish you all the best to you and colleagues!

**Iliya iliev**



# National Policing and Crime Advisor – English Heritage

Mark Harrison BSc (Hons) FSA

## National Policing and Crime Advisor

Heritage Crime Programme & Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage (ARCH)

On June 1 Mark Harrison was appointed the above post with English Heritage. As you know Mark was on secondment to English Heritage, however, he has decided to retire from the police to concentrate on his new position.

## Overall purpose of the post

To lead the Heritage crime programme element of the National Heritage Protection Plan, whose overarching purpose is to establish sustainable working relationships between the Police, CPS, the local authorities and interest groups at a local level in an effort to combat crime an anti-social behaviour within the historic environment.

## Main duties and responsibilities

1. Promote the value and importance of preventing heritage crime and enforcing against it to local authorities, police, the CPS, other enforcement agencies and relevant stakeholders.

2. Promote the value amongst local authorities of signing the national Memorandum of Understanding.
3. Promote the value of membership of the Alliance to Reduce Crime against Heritage amongst stakeholders.
4. Facilitate the establishment of local networks of key individuals.
5. Facilitate and oversee research into the extent of the problem. To advise upon appropriate strategies for the agencies and others to follow arising from that research.
6. Procure a strategic assessment for the regular strategic tasking and control coordination group.
7. Facilitate and participate in localised training programme across the country to raise awareness of heritage crime and the strategies for tackling it.
8. Contribute to the production of national guidance to be given to owners, agencies and interest groups that can help them combat heritage crime.
9. Keep members of the ARCH group updated.



10. Provide reactive advice on casework nationally with the aim of engaging the right individuals locally to take the matter on with confidence. Use these opportunities to establish contacts and local networks.
11. Develop incident and intelligence data collection and a strategy for maintaining and analysing that data.
12. Maintain a database of contacts.
13. Promote the programme within English Heritage.
14. Respond to media requests for information on heritage crime generally and the progress of the programme.
15. Setting the overall strategy for the programme and in liaising with Government regarding relevant law and national policy developments.

**ARCH**  
ALLIANCE TO REDUCE  
CRIME AGAINST HERITAGE

## Retail Prices of Antiquities and their Relevance to Treasure Valuations

“A Fair Market Value” is an often used term in the Treasure Act Code of Practice to re-assure finders, landowners and museums that the objective of the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC) is to arrive at what is perceived to be, the market value for an item; but what is a fair market value and more importantly how is it defined in relation to treasure finds?

Because treasure finds are valued by conjecture of the market value at the time of discovery, what may seem a fair price to one person may well seem unfair to another. It therefore becomes a necessity to establish some ground rules that

can be applied to all finds, however important.

In 1988, when finds were still subject to the law of Treasure Trove, the Treasure Trove Reviewing Committee published a widely read document entitled ‘A Fair Market Value’. The document set out the criteria which would be followed when valuing finds. The document was later consulted when drawing up the Treasure Act Code of Practice; those same criteria are still used today, as the revised ‘Key Criteria for submitting Valuation’ that was updated in 2008 explains. ‘4. Valuations should reflect the price that would

be paid for the object in a sale on the open market between a willing seller and a willing buyer. They should correspond with the hammer price that would be received at a public auction of the object within the UK, exclusive of commission and VAT, taking account of any prospective overseas interests and all relevant circumstances’.

The use of UK auction prices ensures that there is a readily available source of previously published sale prices for comparable pieces, although there may be the odd exception, where two bidders have taken the final

hammer price higher than would be the norm. It is also worth remembering that treasure valuations are based on hammer price, which excludes any additional costs normally incurred by an individual when an item is sold at auction; (an auction house typically takes a 10 to 15% commission, also a ‘buyer’s premium’ is added to the price the highest bidder pays, now often 20 or 25%).

While the process for assessing the value of a treasure item is well founded and for the most part well understood, there are finders who may well be confused between

auction and retail prices. If we take coins as an example, *Spink Coins of England and the United Kingdom Standard Catalogue* is an excellent reference for assessing the value of coins, and sits on most finders' bookshelves, however as stated in the Introduction "The values given represent the range of retail prices at which coins are being offered for sale at the time of going to press and not the price which a dealer will pay for those coins".

If we look at a typical breakdown of retail prices, we will see that it is common for most dealers to routinely mark-up from 30 to 100%, e.g. an artefact bought at auction or from an individual for £50 would need to retail for £100, plus VAT if registered, if overheads are to be covered. While this may seem a rather high level of mark-up, the percentage can vary depending on the size and nature of the business, although for the most part dealers will aim for the higher figure. There may also be regional differences in the amount of mark-up, what sells at 100% mark-up in London, may well not realise that level in Doncaster.

However dealers have to strike a balance, and the level of mark-up will depend primarily on three factors, A. How quickly the artefact can be resold (market demand), B. How high the cash value is (capital outlay), C. The trends in popularity (market dynamics).

One can easily see the problems that would arise if treasure items

were valued in relation to retail prices, which could be an artificial price based on the variables previously outlined. However it is not uncommon for finders, and some of the provisional values used by the TVC for that matter, to cite retail comparisons in correspondence with the TVC; which may result in a challenge to the TVC's valuation, either by the finder or the acquiring museum, based upon values which fall outside the scope of the committees remit. It is therefore essential that any valuation or challenge submitted by either the finder, landowner or acquiring museum is based on verifiable auction prices and not prices advertised in dealers' lists or price catalogues. Similarly, antiquities bought and sold on eBay cannot be verified as genuine sales and would also be an unsuitable comparison.

If we look at Fig 1, typical of a coin found in many small hoards, a shilling of James I, Second Coinage (third bust; mint mark lis); the coin is in near Fine condition and one would expect the coin to

sell at auction for £30 to £35. However, *Spink Coins of England Standard Catalogue* lists the coin, in fine condition, at £75. The coin pictured could therefore be reasonably expected to retail for around £60-£65. Similarly, books on artefacts appear to be retail rather than auction prices; and while books such as *Spink Coins of England* and *Bennetts Artefacts* can be invaluable to the finder for identification, a realistic appreciation of the find's potential value at auction will be considerably less than indicated, when compared with similar items sold at auction. It would be quite understandable for the finder of such a coin to mistakenly expect the coin to realise the retail value, and highlights the dangers of relying on catalogue and dealers list prices, without an understanding of how the retail pricing of antiquities is achieved and its relationship to the valuing of treasure finds.

However, things are not always as straight-forward as they first appear. Items of treasure are valued in their 'as found' condition, which in some circumstances may appear

unattractive to any prospective buyer. Coins in particular may require some degree of cleaning before they are deemed presentable for a dealer's catalogue or shop window. In these circumstances it becomes apparent that the auction price may reflect their eventual potential retail price. The TVC may therefore take into consideration any potential increase in their value after cleaning or conservation and the cost incurred to undertake such work.

Similarly artefacts may have a potential retail value not at first apparent, which could also influence its auction price. Rings are a typical example, where the possibility of repairing a misshaped or damaged ring may increase its eventual retail value; again in such circumstances the TVC may take this into account, increasing its valuation based on the expectations of prospective buyers, taking account of any costs which may be incurred.

There are a large number of auction houses who regularly hold both coin and artefact sales and their auction catalogues will include both the pre-sale estimate and the subsequent sale price. *Timeline Auctions*, for example, conduct regular sales, their coin and artefact catalogues being an excellent source of accurate information on current market trends, similar auctions are also held by other auction houses, most of which enable their catalogues to be accessed online.

**Trevor Austin**



Figure 1



## Contaminated Green Waste Update

*It has been a few months now since the campaign against 'contaminated' green waste was started, and sadly the reports of this rubbish being dumped on fields are still coming in.*

*The petition which was set up, is just short of 1000 signatures, which is a little disappointing bearing in mind all ages can sign, even children. If you haven't signed please do so at your earliest opportunity. <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/30392>*

Those of you who frequent detecting forums, can't have failed to have noticed, the reports of communication, going back and forward to MP's and TV/Press, and you are urged to continue to do this. The contaminated green waste may not be affecting you right now, but with the strict regulation of landfill and hefty

taxes of £64 a tonne, placed on it, certain companies and councils, will find it an opportunity not to be missed.

It appears from the reports coming through, that certain areas are more prone to this waste, than others. This may be because certain areas are using this compost more, or it may be that



some companies who screen this waste, are doing their job correctly and others not.

This week it has already been brought to our attention of yet another rally, where waste was just littered all over the fields, which made detecting all but impossible. More importantly one detectorist became ill after the rally, and has since been on antibiotics. Of course this may be just a coincidence, but it does make you wonder what is in the compost. On this rally there was a circuit board, plastic, glass, aluminium, medical waste containers etc., and these were only the items that were visible to the human eye. This is far more than just a detecting issue. This is becoming more and more a serious environmental health issue.

You are urged to contact your MP, Council, DEFRA and also the press. It is also a good idea to warn your farmer, as most are responsible and would be very concerned if this was dumped on their land.

Although this issue is on many detecting forums, and also being looked at by the NCMD, a small forum and blog have been set up to try and keep much of the information in one place. It is also somewhere you can go, if you wish to discuss this situation in more detail. It has been called [www.countrysidewatch.co.uk](http://www.countrysidewatch.co.uk) and it is open to the public.

Please do not leave it to everybody else. Your support is really needed.

**Steve Rice** (NCMD Member)



# What to do when you find Treasure Part 2 – Provisional Valuation



Gold lamella © Trevor Austin

Following on from Part One, which appeared in issue 8 of *Digging Deep*.

Once your find has been successfully delivered to the coroner, or a place designated by the coroner, and provided that a museum wishes to acquire your find, a decision will be made by his office as to whether a formal inquest is to be held or whether the find can be dealt with by a 'paper' inquest to determine if your find is treasure.

A paper inquest will speed up the handling of treasure cases by the coroner's office, but the decision whether to proceed in this manner will depend on the evidence presented to the coroner. The coroner needs to determine who found it, where it was found, when it was found and if the find fulfils the criteria under the Treasure Act 1996 which will be indicated in the experts report to the coroner. If all evidence is presented to the coroner and there are no objections to the evidence and no witnesses to question, the need for a formal inquest is largely unnecessary. In such cases the find is usually declared treasure by the coroner without the need for a formal inquest. In reality most treasure is dealt with in this way. However should the coroner wish to call a formal inquest, or there is a need to question the evidence, then the interested parties, finder, landowner etc. will be notified when and where the inquest will be held.

If your find is declared treasure by the coroner and a museum has expressed an interest in acquiring your find, the Treasure Registrar and his assistants will write to the interested parties, finder, landowner, acquiring museum with a post inquest letter along with an associated flow chart, a copy of which is reproduced below. It cannot be emphasised

enough the importance in reading and understanding the contents of the letters and the procedure that must be followed should any party wish to provide evidence to the Valuation Committee. Any failure to do so can result in delays in valuing your find.

There are a couple of areas where confusion, misunderstanding or simply because the letter has not been read, that occur from time to time.

Firstly, **Provisional Valuations**. This is *not* a valuation from the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC), but a valuation commissioned by the Treasure Registrar and provided by a recognised dealer or other member of the antiquities trade; however many finders respond to the provisional valuation letter in a manner in which they clearly believe it to be.

The provisional valuation will be considered by the TVC along with any other evidence presented to it when it meets to consider the find (see ii pg 8). In certain cases the TVC may commission more than one provisional valuation.

The purpose of the provisional valuation is to advise the interested parties what the trade expects the find to be worth and provides an opportunity for all parties to comment on in advance of the TVC's deliberations should they so wish to do so.

Secondly, **Comments and Evidence** to the TVC. Firstly let me say that the TVC welcomes and will consider any correspondence from the finder or other interested party. However where those comments refer to the value of the find, the evidence must be presented in a manner that can be evaluated in a logical manner. It is

not uncommon for finders to inform the TVC that they have been offered 'X' number of pounds for their item without any supporting or corroborating evidence to support the claim (see iv pg 8). Such unsubstantiated comments cannot be considered as evidence and delays in valuing the find can ensue while confirmation is sought as to

whether the finder wishes to submit an acceptable valuation.

**An excellent source of information on the correct procedure can be found on the PAS website** <http://finds.org.uk/treasure/advice/finders>

In the next issue Part 3 will look at the valuation process itself.

**Trevor Austin**

Dear Mr XXX

#### Treasure Act 1996: XXX

The Coroner's inquest declared the above find to be treasure and identified you as its XXX. I enclose a copy of the report on the find prepared by the British Museum.

As the XXX wishes to acquire the find, a fair market value is to be established for it, and, subject to the Secretary of State's agreement, ex-gratia payments will be made to the interested parties, based on that valuation. Parties may, if they wish, consider forgoing rewards to allow public collections to acquire treasure without payment. Please let me know if you wish to donate your share of the reward, so that I can ensure that this is recognised by the Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, who sends certificates to donors as a token of gratitude.

The independent Treasure Valuation Committee has commissioned a provisional valuation from its panel of commercial advisers. I enclose a copy of this. This valuation will now provide a starting point for the Committee's consideration of the find.

The Committee will meet on the XXX to recommend a value for the find to the Secretary of State.

It is normal practice to divide rewards equally between the finder and the landowner on a 50:50 basis unless another form of agreement has been reached between them and/or the occupier, or the reward is abated. If it is established that permission to enter the land was subject to the finder and occupier and/or landowner agreeing to share any reward, the Secretary of State will be prepared to apportion the reward with reference to the agreement. If there is a dispute as to the terms of such an agreement, the Secretary of State will determine what is appropriate, acting on the advice of the Treasure Valuation Committee. Where permission to enter land in order to search for treasure has been established, the burden of proving that it was subject to an agreement to share the proceeds of the reward will be with the occupier or the landowner (where different).

Please let me know the details of any agreement you have made to share the reward with the landowner and/or occupier as soon as possible.

You now have the option of submitting comments on this valuation, or indeed commissioning a valuation yourself. There is no obligation to do this. However, any such information should be forwarded to me a week before the scheduled meeting at the above address, for consideration when the Committee meets. In the interests of openness and transparency, any letter sent for the Committee's attention will be circulated to the other interested parties to the find. I would like to inform you that with regards to the value of the find, the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC) is minded to give more weight to submissions that contain one or both of the following factors:

- Examples of other similar items that have been sold in the open market
- Private valuations, provided by credible sources with experience in the trade.

If submitting a private valuation, please take note of the following points:

- The valuation should represent a figure that may be paid for an item in a sale on the open market between a willing seller and willing buyer.
- The valuation is to be based on hammer price, not what would be paid for an item on the private market.
- The Valuer will provide examples of close parallels where possible.
- The valuation should be in the form of a signed letter or email from the Valuer.
- Details of the experience and/or credentials which make the Valuer qualified to provide a private valuation on the find must be included.

Interested parties are reminded that the TVC places greater weight on valuations supplied by valuers who have viewed the items in person. Private valuers who are commissioned by interested parties are welcome to come to the British Museum to see the items in person. If you would like to arrange an appointment please contact either the Department of Prehistory & Europe (020 7323 8441) or the Department of Coins & Medals (020 7323 8255) directly. Further advice about valuations and valuers can be found on the Treasure section of the PAS website: <http://finds.org.uk/treasure>

If you wish to send in information in response to this letter but there will not be time to do so before the meeting, consideration of the find can be deferred. If you wish to submit comments for consideration by the Committee but are unable to do so by please let me know straightaway.

Yours sincerely,

XXX

Assistant Treasure Registrar+



Silver Brooch pin © Trevor Austin

**Find declared Treasure by Coroner<sup>i</sup>**

All Treasure finds being acquired by the British Museum are dealt with by the DCMS who are contactable on: 0207 211 6160

British Museum commissions a **Provisional Valuation<sup>ii</sup>** from an expert advisor – the expert advisor is a respected authority on the commercial value of historic artefacts.  
(please see paragraph 66 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

The Provisional Valuation is sent to all interested parties<sup>iii</sup>. All interested parties can submit comments/ private valuations<sup>iv</sup> or request that a Treasure find is deferred<sup>v</sup> to the following meeting.  
(please see paragraph 67 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

Any information in the form of comments/private valuation or challenge will be forwarded to all interested parties in the interest of openness.

The TVC may defer a find to the following meeting if they feel they require an additional provisional valuation

The Provisional Valuation and comments/ challenges are submitted for consideration by the Treasure Valuation Committee<sup>vi</sup> at the **Treasure Valuation Committee Meeting<sup>vii</sup>**.  
The Committee will (i) inspect and value finds (ii) re-inspect finds where the Valuations have been challenged by an interested party, and (iii) discuss any issues affecting the way finds are valued (please see paragraph 67-70 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

Challenge? If one party does not accept the valuation, that party can ask for the find to be re-inspected by the Committee at its next meeting  
(please see note 3)

Recommendations are sent to all interested parties who are given 28 days to respond

All interested parties agree to the Recommendation and provide details as to the division of reward.  
(Please see paragraph 72-85 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

Do the finder/landowner/occupier wish to donate all or part or their share?  
(please see paragraph 71 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

If the finder/ landowner/ occupier wishes to donate all or part of their share they can contact the secretariat by phone, letter or email

**Acquiring Museum invoiced**  
(museum are given 4 months to pay the invoice and may apply for external funding<sup>viii</sup>)

If you require further information do not hesitate to contact us at Treasure Department, British Museum on 0207 323 8509. The Treasure Act Code of Practice can be viewed at [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

Finder & Landowners/ Occupiers asked for bank details in order that they may receive an ex-gratia award  
(Please see paragraph 72-85 of the Treasure Act Code of Practice)

If you require a larger copy of this document please contact the Treasure Dept on 020 7323 8509

Museum pays invoice and the find is released into the care of the museum. Finder and Landowner/Occupier receive ex-gratia award

- i **Property of the Crown** – Once a find is declared Treasure at an inquest, it becomes the property of the Crown. The Crown recognises the responsible behaviour of finders and landowners who report finds, by making awards, based on the valuation of the find, to those people.
  - ii **Provisional Valuation** – A provisional valuation, by a respected dealer in antiquities or coins, shows that the Committee is consulting as widely as possible, and that the valuations are based on the latest commercial information. A provisional valuation acts as a starting point for the Committee's own valuation.
  - iii **Interested Parties** – An interest party is the finder(s), landowner, occupier or museum of the Treasure find.
  - iv **Submitting comments/Private Valuations or Challenges** – The Committee is very willing to consider written valuation information supported by evidence about the nature of the find and its possible value. When an item is declared treasure it becomes the property of the Crown. All Treasure finds are kept at the British Museum (or the National Museum of Wales, if it is a Welsh find or the Dept. of the Environment if the find is from Northern Ireland), until it is decided what is to happen to them. The Committee appreciates that it can be very expensive for finders, based outside of London, Cardiff or Belfast areas, to arrange their own valuations of finds kept in London. Valuations can be based on photographs and so, in most cases, the British Museum can supply an image on request.
  - v **Request for deferral** – If any interest parties to a Treasure find cannot get valuation information to the Committee before the Treasure Valuation Committee Meeting (see note 6) they can ask for the find to be valued at the following meeting.
  - vi **The Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC)** – The Committee is independent and made up of individuals who have been appointed either because of their knowledge and experience in antiquities and/or because they represent a group particularly involved with Treasure finds (please see annex).
  - vii **Treasure Valuation Committee Meeting** – The Committee usually meets every 6 weeks. At the meeting each Committee member inspects each Treasure find at first hand, and consults each provisional valuation, along with any documents submitted by any interested party. The Committee will also consult previous valuations of similar finds. Calling on all these sources of information, along with its own knowledge and experience, the Committee then decides on a valuation.
- Basis of Valuations** – The Committee values each find on the basis of a private individual offering an item from his/her collection for sale on the open antiquities market. The Committee's valuations will take into account the *quality, significance, and the condition of the*

*find*. The valuations do not take into account the sort of business costs that a dealer has to add onto the price of items, and can only guess at the likely value of a Treasure find, once it has been conserved and cleaned by experts. On the other hand, if it clear to the Committee that the condition of a find has suffered from excessive cleaning or any other type of interference, *carried out after the object was found*, the Committee may well reduce any payment made in connection with it. Finds may be valued at a different amount from a very similar object shown in the Treasure Annual report as the condition of each find is an important factor in the valuation. It may be that there is a difference, either in quality or condition, between the two finds.

- viii **External Funding** – The main aim of the Treasure Act is to ensure that Treasure finds are acquired by local museums for display to the public. Many museums, wishing to acquire Treasure finds, need to apply to one of the funding bodies for financial assistance.

## Annex

### The Treasure Valuation Committee Membership

Professor Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn	<i>Chairman</i> – Senior Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.
Mr John Cherry	<i>Artefacts</i> – Former Keeper of Medieval and Later Antiquities at the British Museum; Expert on Medieval artefacts
Dr David Dykes	<i>Coins</i> – former Head of the National Museum Wales, member of the British Numismatic Society since 1954; an expert in Medieval coinage.
Mr Trevor Austin	<i>Finders</i> – General Secretary of the National Council for Metal Detecting
Mr Peter Clayton	<i>Coins and artefacts</i> – Long-standing consultant for Seaby Antiquities, writer and lecturer; expert on ancient archaeological artefacts.
Dr Tim Pestell	<i>Artefacts</i> – Keeper of Archaeology at Norwich Castle Museum
Professor Ian Carradice	<i>Coins</i> – University of St Andrews; expert on Roman coins
Ms Hetty Gleave	<i>Legal Expertise</i> – Partner at Hunter's Solicitors in Lincoln's Inn. Expert in Cultural Property Law.

## OBITUARY



**Leslie Peter Fowler**  
31 March 1949 – 3 April 2012

**It is with great sadness that I report the death of one of our members and dear friend, Les Fowler following his brave battle against cancer. Les has been a valued member of the Lincolnshire Search Society for over 20 years and also a member of the former Spalding and Stamford club, the Oxford Blues and of course the NCMD.**

Over the years he was a well-known and popular face at many rallies and was highly regarded as a knowledgeable and successful detectorist but overwhelmingly as a helpful, generous, fun and kind man. Les was a wonderful person and his death is a great loss to the detecting world and to all those fortunate enough to have known him.

Our thoughts go out to his wife Sue to whom Les was truly devoted.

**Chris Godfrey, Lincolnshire Search Society.**



# New Citi Money Gallery Opens



Neil McGregor

history of money gives us a way to understand the history of the world.

The opening was conducted by the Director of the British Museum Neil McGregor and the Governor of the Bank of England Sir Mervyn King. The gallery gives a fascinating insight in to the history of money and is well worth a look when you are next at the British Museum.

The Gallery can be found in Room 68 on the first floor.

**Trevor Austin**



On Tuesday 12 June, the British Museum hosted a reception to celebrate the opening of the new Money Gallery. The Gallery, which is sponsored by 'Citi', traces the history of money back over 4,000 years. During that time currency has taken many different forms, from coins to banknotes, shells to mobile phones.

The gallery displays the history of money around the world. From the earliest evidence, to the latest developments in digital technology, money has been an important part of human societies. Looking at the



Sir Mervyn King  
Governor of the Bank of England



## Old Pipework



I put an old Hong Kong-made jewellery box up in the loft, years ago.

The other day, when trying to clear out some of our loft-stored 'dross', I 're-discovered' the box, it contains some of my German finds.

One strange item (I'll explain why) is a smoker's pipe, which I dug up in the (then) British Army barracks, on the outskirts of the town of Moenchnegladbach, in Nordrhein-Westfalen.

The reason I consider it strange is

because, as a smoker's pipe, and made of brass, it must be very heavy after a while, to grip in the smoker's mouth/teeth! It weighs (approx.) 80 grams. I don't know how that compares to the modern type of pipe, but it certainly seems

a lump, to me!

I have no idea of its age – any readers able to help here?

**Alan Hollis**  
Worcester

### MEETING DATES

**The Next NCMD Executive meeting will be on the 4th November**

**The Next Treasure Valuation Meeting will be on the 20th July**

**The Next Portable Antiquities Advisory Board meeting 17th October**

### GET IN TOUCH

For membership enquiries contact the Membership Secretary: **John Rigby**  
6 Arkholme Avenue  
Blackpool, Lancs, FY1 6QJ  
Tel: 01253 692313  
jrigby@sky.com

For all other enquiries please contact the General Secretary: **Trevor Austin**  
51 Hilltop Gardens  
Denaby, Doncaster, DN12 4SA  
Tel: 01709 868521  
trevor.austin@ncmd.co.uk

# Creation Theory Causes Birth of a Ring?

I was not going to go detecting the day that I found this ring. It was a typical autumn morning with a mist hanging that was keeping out the last warmth of a weak and fast approaching winter sun. In other words, it was cold, wet, and not very inviting. My mood reminded me of one early morning many years ago when I was getting ready for work, and I mean very early, when all of a sudden my long suffering wife piped up, "You're putting those boots on the wrong feet". Quick as a flash I replied, "Yes, I should be putting them on yours".

That sets the scene and the way I was feeling, but the instinct soon kicked in and after three cups of coffee my hand was reaching for the trusty C-Scope. I suppose I am one of the rare breeds who have never lost faith in C-Scope. Their machines have served me well over the years and although the really big one has so far eluded me, my finds of all ages, coins and artefacts, are ranked against most others. I could drivel on for page after page about what I think of C-Scope versus other machines and manufacturers etc, but really the people who know me best from my years in the hobby, the various clubs in Yorkshire that I have been a member of, my many outings with the Oxford Bus Club, the Bridlington rallies, Cheryl and her East of England outings, Ken Willcox and our Benhall/Saxmundham days and not forgetting my friends in Kent and Dorset. They can best testify for my faith in C-Scope. But today, after reading the article "Twenty Centuries of Rings", I decided to attempt to add to that knowledge and not to talk of detectors.

Whichever way you look at it padlocks have, throughout the ages, been regarded as a very powerful talisman especially in relation to Creation/Birth/Fertility and that symbolism continues on today. The padlock on the bezel has been described as meaning in the Middle Ages, 'Steadfastness in Love'.

## Extract from Treasure report

"A medieval finger-ring with a convex hoop set with a bezel in the shape of a padlock, which is

soldered on to the hoop of the ring. The shoulders are decorated with irregular panels cross-hatched, probably to receive enamel, with a device that resembles a two-pronged fork with a flame issuing from the centre.

The padlock was used in the Middle Ages to signify steadfastness in love. The significance of the decoration on the shoulders is not clear.

The finger-ring is gold and dates from the fifteenth century."

Well, that may be the way people regard the custom today and lovers all over the world have been steadily reviving a long and ancient/superstitious practice. This involves scratching their initials onto a padlock and fastening it to a bridge, the key is then thrown away into the water. They also appear on gates and trees from Paris to Prague and Moscow to Rome. Some local authorities are now providing special metal trees for the custom so as to save the locks from damaging historical architecture.

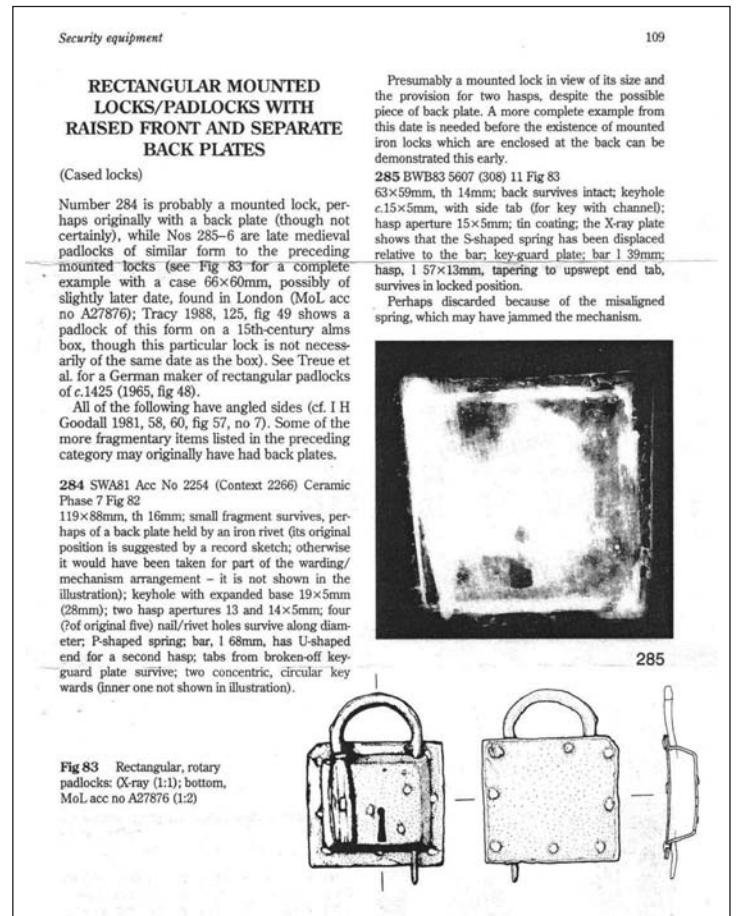
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love\\_padlocks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Love_padlocks)

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/mathieus/love-padlocks-invade-the-world-8q4>

But actually in the Middle Ages, and the date of this ring is the 15th Century, so over 600 years ago, the symbolism meant a great deal more, perhaps bordering on the occult.



Bridge in the centre of the southern Hungarian city of Pécs



I am of the opinion that this ring was 'made to order', with a clear intent on making a very powerful statement saying, this is who I am or what I represent/believe in. It was not made to be placed on display in a jeweller's window for customers to browse and choose. The exact reason why it was made, and what it is meant to symbolise, may never be known

and I completely understand the BM's reluctance to speculate and generalise as they only usually deal in factuality. However, that does not mean that I cannot express a contextual opinion. And it certainly does not excuse the BM's description of this ring as though it had just popped out of a Christmas cracker.

The find was made in context on a ploughed out site of an Archbishop's Palace near York. It was also a well defended site and was found well within the boundaries of the defences so it can be presumed that any losses of gold items, or precious valuables, would be from the clergy, whether Archbishops or their lower staff.

It could of course have also been lost by Nellie Barraclough perhaps whilst out dallying with one of the guards on a warm summer evening. You are free to form an opinion of your own. I must be fair though, George Neville became Archbishop of York in 1465 and held a feast at Cawood Castle. The Earl of Warwick, the Archbishop's brother, aided in the



Gold Padlock ring as found.

preparation of the feast and is said to have wanted a feast larger than the King's coronation feast. Guests included the Duke of Gloucester, the King's brother. The feast lasted several days and became known as the 'Great Feast of Cawood' due to the size of it. Records from the feast show that a substantial quantity of food was consumed, including 104 oxen, 6 wild bulls, 400 swans, 1000 capons and 104 peacocks; 25,000 gallons of wine were consumed with the meals. Now you can bet your bottom dollar that Nellie would not have had an invite to that party.

There would of course have been very large numbers of the nobility of England present along with their wives and girlfriends and all of them would have been wearing their best bits of jewelry. By the way, this ring was not found anywhere near to Cawood, I am only trying to convey the large numbers of people who would have been present at these sumptuous gatherings.

There are references in the book 'Locks from Iran' by Parviz Tanavoli and John T Wertime, 1976' descriptions of locks when used as Talismans, amulets and charms. The authors talk about how they are worn next to the body by girls seeking a suitor. "At sunset the girls would go to the nearest street corner and ask the first sayyid (descendant of Mohammad, the Prophet of Islam) who passes to come and open the lock so that their luck will no longer remain thwarted and, in particular, so that they will marry a sayyid." Once a suitor has been found the lock is ritually

repeatedly opened and closed, and finally and with purpose locked not to be opened until the wedding night.

Another custom when pregnant was for the women to gather in the presence of a mullah. Seven knots are tied in a fine cord, whilst the Ya Sin (chapter 36) is read from the Koran. Each time a knot is tied it is blown upon, the cord is then threaded through a padlock and not removed until the ninth month. This it's said is to give protection during confinement.

This artefact seems to fit all three of these rituals and would have been treasured by the owner for the powerful and symbolic power it represented. With this example if the ring was made in this way to depict Love, then it could have been to symbolise the Archbishop's marriage to the Virgin Mary/Church or Christ. With the decoration on the shoulders replacing the knotted cord, and the red enamel representing the blood of Christ.

Parts of these customs/rituals could conceivably have crossed faiths – especially when thinking of the Spanish/Italian and French influence mingling with the Islamic culture around the Mediterranean area. Later being dropped from the Christian beliefs when the barbaric persecutions such as the witch trials began. Clergy who held this power were also to be feared. Kings sometimes bowed to their requests and opinions, but even the clergy would not be seen wearing such things when the Witchfinder General was on the prowl. You only have to look at the absolute

sway that has been held over the population of Ireland, and which has only recently been broken, to realize that their power continued into modern times. This belief is still present in many countries and another instance of people in high places holding down the uneducated masses is the story of a Nigerian woman, reportedly pregnant for 15 years and then giving birth to two padlocks.

Another example of this ring working symbolically is if it was made to depict CREATION or in other words, the BIRTH of the world.

The following is an extract from Genesis at the end of the first three chapters, after the creation. –

Yahweh God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. Now, lest he put forth his hand, and also take of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever..."<sup>3,23</sup> Therefore Yahweh God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.<sup>3,24</sup> So he drove out the man; and he placed Cherubs at the east of the Garden of Eden, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

In this example the design on both shoulders of the ring would depict the flame of a sword, guarding the way to the padlock, which in turn represents the Garden of Eden – the birth of the world.

The ring would again have been

worn as an Episcopal ring symbolising the Archbishops marriage to God. Hold the photo sideways with the padlock to the top and the image of a flaming sword can clearly be seen. It could also perhaps be interpreted as incense issuing from a burner rising to heaven. With the red enamel again representing the blood of Christ, which in turn would fit nicely with the representation of being Born Again through the New Testament. I wish that I was a Theologian. Perhaps a theologian could work it out. At least I can say that my enthusiasm has been a little more than others.

For whatever reason, or whoever, placed the order for this ring it has, thankfully, survived intact and is now a very unique object. There are many and varied examples of precious stone rings, but I can find no references to another ancient ring bearing a similar bezel. It may not bear a precious stone but to me it is an absolutely stunning Gem of a ring.

There is within the cross hatching on the shoulders a reddish hue which was much more pronounced when the ring was first recovered. I believe that red enamel was keyed into the ring by the cross hatching and I have taken the liberty to re-touch some of the pictures to show how it may have looked, or how it could look again with some expert restoration. Amen to that.

**Ron Heaps**



Gold Padlock ring as it would possibly have looked, or how it may look again with expert restoration.

# Thomas Hall winner of the York's coin of year

In Issue 9 of *Digging Deep* under Yorkshire Region AGM, I incorrectly credited Stan Raymond with the finding of the Coin of the Year, a rare DVMNOCoveros TIGIRnos SENO silver unit.

The coin was in fact found by Thomas Hall of the East Yorkshire MDC.

My apologies to Thomas.

Trevor Austin



## MIDLANDS REGION

# Midland Region Update!

Our year so far at committee level has been directed in streamlining the administration of our regional affairs and in holding various ordinary meetings to benefit those members willing to attend.

At our AGM held on 5 April we were happy to welcome Richard Henry (then acting FLO for the Warwickshire/Worcester Area). Richard gave an interesting and informative talk on *Roman Life in*

*Britain* and illustrated this with slides of Roman coins and artefacts. Answering questions from the audience, he showed an excellent grasp of the occupation period. Thank you Richard and we hope to see you again before too long.

On May 23 we held our annual quiz and this enjoyable event was well attended with various Midland clubs fielding teams of knowledgeable (and not so)

members who battled it out to win the prizes. The Winners were Coventry Heritage 'A' who confounded the opposition by getting a near perfect score. Well done chaps! The runners up were again a Coventry Heritage team this time the 'B' side ably Captained by John Wells. Well done to you too and commiserations to the rest of us! Brian Pollard again set the

questions, not at all on subjects akin to detecting but nevertheless proving to be not that easy. Just how it should be. Thank you Brian and all the rest of the committee in helping to stage this night.

During June, 27 to be exact, our OGM was attended by a good number of people wishing to hear an illustrated talk by our friend Dr Kevin Leahy. Quite a few non detectorists attended, some of



Richard Henry FLO discussing some exhibits with visitors to the exhibition



Some of the display materials in the annexe to the exhibition



Pete Johnson and Dave Runsey of the Warwickshire Detector Club discussing an exhibit



Ray Simpson of Coventry Heritage Detector Society makes a final check on his display

those being archaeologists and academia. It is always a pleasure to have Kevin give his valuable time to come and speak to us and needless to say he was met with a very intent audience. Thank you sincerely Kevin. We are sure we will be seeing you again soon.

For our future events we have a pretty formidable time ahead of us. In September we once again will hold an exhibition of finds in the distinguished and once glorious confines of the Drapers Hall right close up to the Old Coventry Cathedral and Medieval Saint Mary's Hall. The Midland members who gave of their time in presenting the last spectacular show in September 2011, will again be called on to repeat their excellent work and make this another success for combined effort from the Midland clubs.

This time preparations should be much easier as we have learnt a bit about putting on a successful display and much of the equipment we acquired last year will be to hand for this year's event. Please get in touch quickly if you and/or your club would like space to present a display as it will again be at a premium. Tables will

be available for your finds and refreshments free to exhibitors and helpers on the preceding work day and on the exhibition day. Arrangements are being made for a member of PAS to be in attendance on the day to help identify any finds made by the general public.

Also in September, the Midland region are to support R.A.B.I. (*Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute*) in putting on a rally to raise funds for its dependent members. The last event raised an amount of £2000 and was attended by 130 detectorists from all over the country. Entries are limited to 150 so if you wish to contact us, do it very soon and enter for a place. Tickets are £15. There are no caravan facilities on site and own arrangements must be made by those who wish to stay overnight at sites in the vicinity.

We continue to support the efforts of the NCMD and to provide a link between active clubs in the Midlands and the National Council. Our continued efforts will very soon become apparent when details concerning our combined fight against 'green waste' will be published. Enjoy your detecting.

**Byron Tosh**



## Subscribe today and read about the biggest finds EXCLUSIVELY in *The Searcher!*



Buy the latest issue online or subscribe online **NOW** at [www.thesearcher.co.uk](http://www.thesearcher.co.uk)

OR Ring **01778 392036**

**Only £8.75** every quarter by Direct Debit or **£36.99** per year by Credit Card

A **new 'App'** is now available to download straight to your mobile device in either Android, iPhone, iPod or iPad format. Or download the digital version straight to your computer.

FREE sample issue is available • Only £2.99 per issue or subscribe for:

3 issues @ £7.47   6 issues @ £14.94   12 issues @ £29.98

Available at either: **iTunes Newsstand** or [www.PocketMags.com](http://www.PocketMags.com)



# We must find all this metallic rubbish! Can you help?

This was the gist of a phone call I received from a Mrs. Jaqui Hill early in May...

Mrs Hill explained that her husband had ordered and laid a brand new gravel and pebble driveway alongside their new house extension, on which their 4 x 4 would be parked. The car had never actually been parked there because the building work had been delayed by bad weather and scaffolding had thus had to be erected over the new driveway. When the builders had completed the extension, Mr. Hill discovered that they had apparently dropped a few metal fasteners, mainly screws and nails, onto the gravel. These could do serious damage to the 4 x 4's tyres. On closer examination the Hills found that the gravel was heavily infested with nails and screws most of which had almost certainly been present when the gravel had been delivered. The Hills and their two children had spent about a fortnight on their hands and knees looking for these fasteners and had so far found about 30. Jaqui wanted to know whether a metal detector would help. I explained

that most metal detectors are designed not to find small steel objects, but I would put her in touch with a club which would do what it could. She then told me that the Hills lived locally in Reigate, and I replied that I would therefore pass the matter to my club, East Surrey R&R Group, who are also based there.

At the next club meeting a few members scratched their heads while trying to think of a machine which was easy to use and could be set to accurately detect small steel objects. Top of the range Whites and Minelab machines would be totally unsuitable. Club chairman Terry Lane then pointed out that the club had a Fisher 1280-Z Aquanaut which had been used at Country Shows to demonstrate how incremental discrimination worked. With minimum discrimination the machine should do the job. We had lent it out twice before, albeit for finding rings, and it had so far had a 100% success record. It was also easy to use with only

three control knobs and no confusing visual display unit.

We contacted Jaqui, who came to my house for a quick instruction session before taking the machine away. Ten days later she rang up and said the operation had been a total success. Using the 1280-Z, the Hill family had found over 70 steel fastenings and one of the children had found a penny! They were confident that all the metal waste had been found. She returned the machine with a note that read *"Thank you so much for lending us your metal detector- fabulously useful and fabulous fun"*, together with a donation to our club funds.

This is the latest in a long succession of occasions in which detecting clubs have helped members of the public recover metalwork. The nails and screws the Hills found were of no intrinsic value, but every one of them could have punctured a large 4 x 4 compatible tyre costing over £200 to replace.

The question as to how the gravel

and pebbles had apparently been polluted in the first place remains unanswered. The NCMD has become increasingly aware of the problems caused by 'green waste' and NCMD President John Wells wrote a comprehensive but also alarming article on the subject in Issue 9 of *Digging Deep*. It is possible that smashed up furniture waste had been fly tipped into a gravel quarry and when the recovered gravel was washed the wood and chipboard had floated to the surface leaving the fasteners below together with the pebbles.

The operation by which the Hills cleared their driveway of metal pollution demonstrates what metal detectors actually do. Many of our hobby's opponents claim that detectors are *"works of the Devil designed to plunder and destroy our heritage etc"*.

They are not. They do exactly what it says on the side of the box. They detect metal.

**Roger Mintey**  
Southern Region



# CTX 3030

The Future of Discovery



The waterproof all-terrain CTX 3030 is the ultimate TREASURE detector.

Call now on **0800 056 4246** or visit **www.ctx3030.com** for more info. Email **minelab@minelab.ie** for a FREE CTX 3030 product brochure.

FBS2 Smartfind 2 **GPSi** **Wi-Stream**

World's Best Metal Detection Technologies



## SUBSCRIBE TODAY and SAVE £7.70

- ① 14 issues for the price of 12 **Save £7.70**
- ② 28 issues for the price of 24 **Save £15.40**
- ③ 6 issue subscription **Only £23.10**



## PLUS RECEIVE A FREE BOOK VOUCHER



WHEN YOU TAKE OUT A 1 OR 2 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION

\*OFFER VALID FOR LIMITED PERIOD & for UK subs only see [www.treasurehunting.co.uk](http://www.treasurehunting.co.uk) for overseas rates

ORDER FORM - Send to: Greenlight Publishing, 119 Newland Street, Witham, Essex CM8 1WF

Please supply:

- ① 14 issues for the price of 12 + £5 book voucher, UK post free, £46.20
- ② 28 issues for the price of 24 + £10 book voucher, UK post free, £92.40
- ③ 6 issues for £23.10

COMMENCE SUBSCRIPTION WITH.....ISSUE

Payment enclosed: £  cheques should be made payable to Greenlight Publishing




Card security code (last 3 digits on signature strip)

Expiry Date.....Valid From.....

Maestro card issue No ..... Sign.....

Send to: NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

..... POSTCODE .....

Tel..... email ..... TH

Order online [www.treasurehunting.co.uk](http://www.treasurehunting.co.uk)

orders: 01376 521900 Mon-Fri 9-5pm

# Operation Nightingale



A mystery Roman building close to Caerwent, a Roman market town *Venta Silurum*, in South Wales was the location for the latest archaeological project involving injured servicemen from the Rifle Battalions which has been code named 'Operation Nightingale' which is the brainchild of Corporal Steve Winterton and Sargent Diarmaid Walshe (Archaeological Facilitator for LEGISE:NCMD (SR) and Chairman of West Kent Archaeological Society) of 1 Rifles together with Richard Osgood of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, aims to assist with the rehabilitation of servicemen injured both mentally (combat and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and physically (gunshot wounds, mines, Improvised Explosive Devices and roadside bombs), primarily on operations in Afghanistan.

The last time the mystery Roman site had been investigated archaeologically was in the 1880's when a team of antiquarians had had 'an enjoyable time' digging the site! There seem to be indications that a black and white mosaic had been found and a rough sketch made but no reports were ever lodged with the National Museum of Wales. The recent collapse of a number of trees, overgrowth of other vegetation and activity of rabbits on the site had caused damage to the remaining Roman structures. This situation had initiated the project which commenced with undergrowth clearance, geophysical survey and inspection of the site by Cadw (Welsh Heritage) representatives.

We were lucky enough to be asked to assist, as the metal detecting

We were deployed to detect the topsoil at the sites where the trenches were proposed, in the trenches themselves as they progressed to identify metallic objects in situ for archaeological excavation and on the spoil heaps. We were also allowed access to other areas adjacent to the scheduled site where we were permitted to detect and to dig.

The weather was kind to us and good progress was made over the first couple of days and further trenches were started. We were joined during the week by senior members of the armed forces involved in the servicemen's rehabilitation including Commodore Peter Buxton, the Chairman of the Joint Services Archaeological Society, himself a qualified archaeologist, the Padre and

a fairly narrow time band of 270-350AD, a 1907 Edward VII halfpenny and a 1943 George VI three pence but very few artefacts. The only artefacts were many Roman iron roof nails, two parts from probably the same Roman tumbler lock, a tiny piece of a possible Roman brooch, a piece of casting waste and a yet unidentified item. We can only assume that a lot of the larger coins and many of the artefacts either just were not there or had been recovered by the antiquarians. We did, however, collect an impressive array of cartridge cases (.566 and .762 blanks) and other used military projectiles!

After returning home, we processed all the metal finds, identifying them, writing individual small finds reports and taking photographs



Archaeology was chosen for the project as it utilises a number of the skills that servicemen have to offer such as landscape recognition, team working and involves physical outdoor activity. The servicemen were also to complete the finds processing and the writing of the necessary reports. The project involved mixing with civilians, experts in their respective fields, archaeology professors and students from Leicester University and archaeologists from Wessex Archaeology. Leicester University were also providing further educational opportunities for the servicemen as they prepare for civilian life after medical discharge from the Army.

The site itself is situated inside a Ministry of Defence secure training area which was created in 1938 as a Royal Navy propellant factory complex. The training ground, accessed through a manned and secure gateway, is a maze of derelict and partially derelict buildings.

team, with the 'Operation Nightingale' MARS 2 project and travelled to South Wales for a week long excavation of the scheduled ancient monument, with the necessary permissions already in place from Cadw. The excavation team was led by the Ministry of Defence's own archaeology professional, Martin Brown, who directed the dig.

After introductions, a briefing where we were warned not to venture too far from the excavation site, as we might be kidnapped and interrogated by soldiers who were around the area taking part in a training exercise, and a site visit the operation commenced! Trenches were dug in various areas of the site, primarily over wall remains that had been exposed by fallen trees, in trenches identified as having been dug by the antiquarians, at an area adjacent to the site that had been used as a quarry and on a slope where the land was slipping, gradually down hill towards a disused railway line.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Marks another metal detectorist. All the visitors took an active part with Peter excavating a trench and Paul recovering metal items from the excavations. We were also visited by journalists from **Current Archaeology** magazine and Phil Harding from 'Time Team' and our claim to fame is having detected his spoil heap but not found anything!

We also enjoyed some extra-curricular activities involving visits to the pub to mix with the locals in Caerwent, a private tour of the Roman baths in Bath, together with some consumption of the Bath spring water and a trip to watch a televised Premier Division Rugby match.

By the end of the week areas of Roman walls had been exposed, a hypercaust system and some small sections of the mosaic discovered together with some high status pottery and painted wall plaster. We had amassed a collection of 18 Roman coins, all except one, from

before returning all the objects and paperwork to the site director for inclusion in the official report and the eventual site archive.

It was extremely interesting to be involved in this and hopefully future projects and to assist with the rehabilitation of these young heroes. Indeed, during the Caerwent dig, some of the servicemen were able to get a good night's sleep for the first time in years. We understand that the project is to be expanded from the 1-7 Rifle Battalions to the rest of the Regiment and indeed to the other services. It is also believed that the American military are looking at the project as a successful rehabilitation course for their own injured personnel. We can only hope that the 'Operation Nightingale' project continues to evolve over the coming years and that further young servicemen and women, with an interest in archaeology, can be helped in this way.

**Lesley Burr**

**Disclaimer:** "The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of its correspondents and contributors, views which are not necessarily agreed to by officers of the NCMD or the organisations as a whole. Such views or comment cannot be taken in any way to represent NCMD policy on any particular issue or topic unless stated. It is deemed by the NCMD that the responsibility for the accuracy and content of any articles submitted, either by individual members or clubs remains with their authors. Where possible the Newsletter manager will check the accuracy of statements and their content and reserves the right to edit or amend content which is deemed unsuitable for publication."