

The seventh issue of *Archaeology International*

Since *AI* was launched seven years ago, its aims and format have not changed, but each year the task of choosing a representative selection of a dozen or so articles from the plethora of possible topics becomes more challenging. This year I have again chosen a mix of themes, regions and periods that I hope does justice to the great range of research being undertaken by members of the Institute.

Eight of the twelve articles in this issue describe field projects. Matthew Pope brings us up to date with research at Boxgrove, the Lower Palaeolithic site in Sussex that was featured in the first issue of *AI*, and describes the new investigations that seek to relate the site to its surrounding landscape. David Rudling, whose research at Bignor Roman villa was also featured in the first issue, writes with Chris Butler about his recent excavations at the site of Barcombe Roman villa, farther east in Sussex. We then move to Iceland for a description by Gudrun Sveinbjarnardóttir of evidence that geothermal energy was tapped in the medieval period at the farm once owned by the island's most famous chieftain and scholar, Snorri Sturluson. Water, in the form of a pre-Roman sacred lake in northern Italy, is the focus of another project: Kathryn Lomas describes the inscriptions and other offerings found at the lake, and discusses the relationship between ritual and the development of writing. Marcello Mannino and Ken Thomas report some initial results from another project in Italy. They are investigating the role of marine resources, principally shellfish, among the prehistoric inhabitants of several groups of caves in northwest Sicily, by combining analyses of the archaeological remains with ecological study of living populations of marine molluscs. Two projects in Africa are the subject of articles: Fekri Hassan describes his long-term research at Farafra oasis in Egypt on the relationship in prehistory between environmental (especially climatic) change and changes in human settlement and subsistence; and Andrew Reid discusses his research in Uganda on the history of the kingdom of Buganda. The eighth field project featured is Simon Hillson's palaeodental investigation of diet and disease in the coastal desert of southern Peru, where mummified human burials have been preserved by the extreme aridity.

Members of the Institute are involved in two projects at World Heritage Sites, at Volubilis in Morocco and Merv in Turkmenistan (described respectively in the 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 issues of *AI*). In this issue, Henry Cleere, who was for a decade an advisor to the World Heritage Committee, provides an overview of its aims and achievements, and discusses the representation of archaeological sites on the World Heritage List.

The final two articles describe new approaches to conservation in context and the use of new communications technology in the improvement of public access to archaeological and historical data. Dean Sully, working with the National Trust, shows how it has been possible both to conserve and to facilitate culturally responsive use of a Maori meeting house that was transported from New Zealand to Surrey in the 1890s, and Suzanne Keene outlines a new project that aims to provide novel electronic access to city histories.

Continuing the series of retrospective articles in *AI* that relate to the history of the Institute, Peter Gathercole, who studied European prehistory at the Institute in the early 1950s, recalls his life in London at that time and reflects on what the experience of being taught by Gordon Childe and other pioneers of the subject has meant to him.

I hope this seventh issue will give readers a flavour of the strength and breadth of current research at the Institute, and I thank all who have contributed to *AI*, as authors and in other ways.

David R. Harris

Mission statement

The Institute of Archaeology is a researched institution recognized also for the excellence of its teaching. Its mission is:

- To be internationally pre-eminent in the study, and comparative analysis, of world archaeology.
- To enhance its national and international reputation for the quality and breadth of its multidisciplinary and thematic approach to the study of the human past.
- To promote best practice in the management of cultural heritage and in the study, care and preservation of archaeological artefacts.
- To promote awareness of the problems caused by illicit trade in antiquities and the destruction of archaeological heritage that it entails.
- To ensure that the social, political and economic contexts of the practice of archaeology are taught and appreciated.
- To be at the forefront of international research in archaeological sciences.
- To play a major role in furthering the understanding of London's archaeological and historical past.
- To provide archaeological opportunities of the highest quality to all, regardless of background.

Citation of radiocarbon and calendric dates

The 1997/98 issue of *AI* included a note (on p. 2) explaining the differences between "conventional" and "calibrated" radiocarbon dates and their relationship to calendric dates. *AI* has adopted the recommendation of the Twelfth International Radiocarbon Conference on how dates should be cited, and uses the following typographical conventions:

- calendar years – AD, BC, BP (= before present, defined as before AD 1950)
- conventional radiocarbon years – ad, bc, bp
- calibrated radiocarbon years – cal AD, cal BC, cal BP.