

THE CASTLE STUDIES GROUP BULLETIN



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Editorial

At the Castle Studies Group AGM in April it was agreed to separate the editorship of the summer *Bulletin* from the main publication of the group, the annual *Journal*. This is mainly to allow our primary CSG editor, Neil Guy, to concentrate fully on the *Journal* content and the group website.

This then is my first *CSG Bulletin* having taken over the reins from Neil and I thank him for helping me with this one and for showing me the ropes.

For the *Bulletin* to remain of interest to members it needs the continued support of everyone to send in items of local news, short pieces and notes, details of forthcoming publications, events and other items relating to our subject.

Contributions can be sent anytime from the beginning of each year ready for compilation in June. Please contact me by email at Bulletin@castlestudiesgroup.org.uk. The *Bulletin* and *Bibliography* are also published on the Castle Studies Group website: www.castlestudiesgroup.org.uk as colour pdf files with full text search capability.

Peter A Burton

Future CSG Spring Conferences

The annual spring conferences are the main occasions when CSG members can meet over a long week-end to discuss our subject and visit some important sites in the area, often in the company of local experts. The venue for the 2010 conference will be the West Country of England, based in Taunton, Somerset (see announcements, page 16) but the venues for 2011 and beyond have not yet been agreed.

Members are invited to make suggestions of where future CSG conferences might be held, perhaps with a proposed list of sites to visit. Areas previously covered could be revisited with a different selection of sites. Please make contact with any of the CSG Officers listed on the CSG website with your ideas. Volunteer organisers are also warmly invited to step forward. A list of previous locations is printed below and details of castle sites visited are on the website.

1987	CSG Founded, Mid Wales	1999	West Wales
1988	Yorkshire	2000	Kent/E Sussex
1989	West Scotland	2001	Belgium
1990	Ulster	2002	SW Scotland
1991	SW England	2003	W Midlands England
1992	SE Ireland	2004	NW Ireland
1993	Cheshire/N Wales	2005	W Sussex
1994	Northumberland	2006	Galway
1995	East Anglia	2007	Lothian
1996	East Midlands England	2008	Monmouthshire/Brecon
1997	NE Scotland	2009	SW Ireland
1998	Leinster		

Above: *King John's Castle, Limerick*. The city where this year's CSG Spring conference was based. A full report and site descriptions will appear in the 2009/2010 *Journal*

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News Scotland

Scottish Castles Initiative

Historic Scotland is undertaking an important initiative exploring castle restoration in Scotland. The Scottish Castles Initiative was announced on 1st May by Michael Russell MSP, Scottish Government Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution at the restored Barholm Castle in Dumfries and Galloway.

Scotland is internationally renowned for its castles and tower-houses. Whether ruined or still in use, they are an important part of Scotland's heritage and identity. Scotland has many moderately sized towers-houses that lend themselves to re-occupation, and as a consequence there has a long tradition of successful castle and tower house restoration. This tradition continues into the present day with towers being restored for family homes and also for commercial and leisure use.

- A guide to castle and tower house restoration drawing on Scottish exemplars, showing best practice and acting as a resource pack for prospective owners and developers.
- A publication outlining the history of castle and tower-house restoration in Scotland which will provide the historical context of this fascinating aspect of Scotland's historic environment.
- Identification of an exemplary project to allow further public understanding of the history of Scottish castles and tower-houses, their conservation and/or their restoration and the development of craft-skills and best practice.

The first phase of the project, which is to carry out an audit of buildings and to discuss their inclusion with prospective owners, is progressing well. This will lead to the online register of castles that are potential restoration candidates.

For further information please contact Dr Allan Rutherford of Historic Scotland at alan.rutherford@scotland.gsi.gov.uk



Restoration projects are by their nature complex, and restoration will not be appropriate in every case. However Historic Scotland believes that the tradition of restoration should continue and be encouraged. The Initiative will provide people with guidance, advice and the expertise they need for restoration projects. It is the first of its kind to be prepared by the Scottish Government and aims to encourage financial investment in, and refurbishment of, Scotland's built heritage during the economic downturn.

The main aims of the project are:

- The preparation, maintenance and publishing of an online register of castles and tower houses which demonstrate the characteristics that would enable a successful scheme for restoration to be developed.

*Above: Mike Russell MSP, Scottish Minister for Culture and the owner of restored **Barnholm Castle**, Dumfries & Galloway.*

Craigievar Castle under major repair project

A team of more than 20 traditionally-skilled stonemasons are hard at work crafting crucial stone pieces that will eventually adorn the National Trust for Scotland's refurbished Craigievar Castle near Alford.

Craigievar Castle is currently undergoing a major repairs project to correct structural damage and replace the castle's cement harling with a breathable traditional lime coating. The replacement harling is in place and awaiting a fresh coat of limewash.

Now, 23 expert stonemasons from Laing Traditional Masonry Limited are hard at work crafting brand new water spouts and cannons for the castle. Many of the original spouts were lost or damaged decades ago.



Above: *Craigievar Castle.*

Conservation staff at the Trust decided that it was important to restore the spouts, and commissioned the Aberdeenshire firm to craft the new pieces.

The designs for the stonework were created by illustrator John Borland, who has worked closely with the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) on previous projects. John examined the surviving cannons and developed brand new patterns which are sympathetic to the look of the castle.

National Trust for Scotland Lead Surveyor Ian Davidson is leading the project on Craigievar Castle. He said:

“The work to create these important pieces of stonework for Craigievar Castle is a once in a century opportunity. We do not know exactly how they looked, but through careful research, we feel confident that the new pieces will add a great deal to the look of the castle.

“We thought it was important to create something new, rather than attempt to recreate the past. These are the types of judgements that need to be made continuously during a conservation project of this scale.

“The team at Laings are our main contractors on this project and we are pleased to play our part in protecting and preserving the traditional building and masonry skills

for which they are so well-known, as we protect and preserve one of Scotland’s best loved castle for generations to come.”

Steven Laing, Managing Director at Laings Traditional Masonry said:

“The team are thoroughly enjoying this latest piece of the project. Each mason has the chance to make their mark on a stone that will survive for centuries and that will be enjoyed by future generations. It is a great honour to be taking on an important role in restoring one of Scotland’s most prestigious castles to its former glory.”

The Stirling Castle Palace Project

The Stirling Castle Palace Project involves the conservation and refurbishment of the Royal Lodgings to present them as they might have appeared in the heyday of Scotland’s Stewart court in the mid 16th century. Extensive historical and archaeological research has been carried out to ensure the interior decoration, as well as the materials and craftsmanship used, are as authentic as possible.

An interpretive display on the court of James V will be created in the palace vaults and a Renaissance Gallery on the upper floors of the palace will house the original Stirling Heads, a rare group of intricately carved oak ceiling medallions depicting kings, queens, courtiers and mythological creatures. Costumed interpreters will bring the rich history of the 16th century to life to enrich visitors’ enjoyment.

Chris Watkins, head of Historic Scotland’s major projects team, said: “The Stirling Castle Palace Project will not only conserve the palace as a monument of international importance but also present and interpret the magnificence of the royal lodgings, the superb Renaissance carvings and the life of the royal court.

“The project will enable us to maximise the appeal of Scotland’s finest Renaissance palace and encourage more people to visit both the castle and the city of Stirling. And the creation of the Stirling Castle brand, with its distinctive new logo, will play a very important part in helping us promote and project all that this wonderful attraction stands for and offers.”



Above: *Stirling Castle Palace wall. (photo Kernow Photography)*

News England

The Great Tower at Dover Castle: Meeting on 19 March 2009

This meeting was called by English Heritage to announce, and canvass reactions to, its planned 're-display' of the Henry II keep/great tower. It was held in the castle itself and followed by a guided tour of the keep – dimly lit in the early evening and littered with odd bits of plant and equipment - though otherwise the fabric was more open to view than it has been for years or presumably will be for years to come. The meeting itself was addressed by Barry Cunliffe (Chairman of EH), Tracy Wahdan (Visitor Operations Director) and Edward Impey (Director of Research). The audience included archaeologists, historians and heritage experts from all over the country, many of whom will no doubt be making clear their own reactions to the Dover plans.

The basis of the project was outlined in the letter of invitation under Prof. Cunliffe's name and is worth quoting for its careful justification: 'Dover Castle is one of the most significant and most visited of English Heritage's properties. As the first stage in a long-term programme to improve the quantity and quality of what we show and tell our visitors at the castle as a whole, we have embarked on the re-presentation and interpretation of Henry II's Great Tower. Informed by a dedicated programme of multi-disciplinary research, the intention is to re-display the interiors to evoke their appearance and atmosphere on the occasion of a royal visit in the late 12th century. This will largely be achieved through the introduction of new material designed in the idiom of the period, but normally without copying specific original items, and without making any irreversible changes to the historic fabric. The building will re-open in the late summer of this year.'



What this means in practice is replica decorations and furniture, tailored to model the likely use of spaces in the building, themed in some cases to particular events (such as the visit of the Patriarch of Jerusalem to seek aid from King Henry in 1185) and populated with animatronic 'speaking characters' as well as curatorial staff (not in costume). Almost every space in the keep will be included in the decorative scheme; the two chapels, for instance, will be given simple liturgical furnishings and painted walls. The phrase 'pushing the boundaries of what we can do to bring out the potential of historical sites' was used.



Naturally this raises many issues: about Dover and about how castle sites in general should be displayed, as a high-profile project like this might possibly be seen to set an important precedent (see the comments by Robert Liddiard 'Presenting medieval castles' and Jeremy Ashbee 'Monument conservation and presentation' in *Castle Studies Group Journal* 22, reprinted from English Heritage's own *Conservation Bulletin*, 2008). It was clear at the meeting that one motive for change is economic.

Dover attracted 180,000 paying visitors in 2000, which is now down to 140,000 in 2007/8, and the current aim is to boost these figures by at least 20%. £3,000,000 has already been spent on conservation of the whole site in the last three years (most recently £1,000,000 on a Second World War observation post) and a further £2,000,000 is committed to conserve the 19th century barracks (debate over possible use of them is under way). A new visitor centre is planned. There are also currently 70,000 free admissions annually on educational visits, many from local schools. Along with tourism, this helps to explain the willingness of the local authority to match EH investment for the ongoing renovation from the 'Sea Change' fund, which is aimed at reviving the economy of seaside towns.

Yet, despite the emphasis on the need to 'punch above our weight in the visitor attraction competition' in the management presentation, Edward Impey was able to argue that basic conservation principles were not being compromised: decorative elements would mostly be attached to the fabric without affecting the structure, and where more permanent fixings were intended (as with the 27 replica medieval doors) there is strong justification for them, on more than just presentational grounds. An impressive case was made for the thoroughness of the scholarly research which was going into the whole scheme of display and furnishing. Alongside this, it is also undeniable that the investment, and the opportunity it has created, have made possible the fullest survey yet of the

keep's fabric (building on the recording work of the 1990s) and some recent excavation. That is all gain, and some of the findings will be set out in an introductory display in the inner bailey. Nor can it be claimed that the previous arrangement of the keep was in any way satisfactory, as much of the interior was occupied by a display loosely linked to Henry VIII's visit to the castle which looked as if it consisted of theatrical props left over from a Six Wives television series and had little connection with the site. Unlike many castles, Dover's keep is already fully floored and accessible, and though this has been achieved in ways which would never be permitted today (notably the Napoleonic-period brick vaults cutting through the medieval fabric) it cannot now be changed and can be argued that the new plan will make more sense of the



existing rooms for almost all visitors. Equally, though, it follows that the 'Dover' model may not be appropriate elsewhere - especially if done on the cheap!

In the end, judgement will be easier once all is in place, and things are already well advanced. The 19 March meeting was

essentially informative rather than consultative: carpenters, painters and furniture makers, among others, are hard at work and the budget is being spent. The Castle Studies Group will be a good forum to canvass wider reactions in due course. Further work on the castle may depend on the perceived success of this project.

Meanwhile, the English Heritage organised conference on Dover at the Society of Antiquaries (25-26 September 2009) will present some of the findings and new ideas from current research on the castle. See Diary Dates page for details.

Richard Eales

Revealed: New Plan to rebuild Pontefract Castle

An "eccentric" idea to build a new castle in Pontefract has been revealed. Wakefield Council leader Peter Box and local historian Brian Lewis, have created the plan and presented it at a public meeting in the town earlier in the year, and say the ambitious project would:

- Boost tourism.
- Create new jobs and teach historical skills.
- Attract investment.
- Complement other cultural attractions in the district.

- Be educational by showing how castles were built and how people lived in the past.

Councillor Box said: "It is an eccentric idea but when you look past the eccentricity there is a lot of merit on a lot of different levels - socially, economically, culturally. "We came up with it because we are both interested in archaeology and the past, but from a very commercial point of view it would be a huge economic benefit to Pontefract and the district. "I just see it as part of our heritage and a wonderful project, it's something that will get people interested and excited. "I am 100 per cent confident if we can get this off the ground, people will come from all over the world. "It's one of those mad ideas that could work."



Councillor Box said he mooted the idea of rebuilding the Pontefract Castle ruins at a public meeting about six years ago. Mr Lewis said: "We know that is impractical because there is too much archaeology, we couldn't get permission to build on the ruins.

"About 95 per cent of the archaeology there has not been excavated.

"We see this new building as complementary to the ruins, it will give another focus to heritage in the district." The pair say the castle project would take at least 50 years and grow in phases - starting with a timber structure. They hope its location would be visible from the motorway but say it is too early to estimate costs.

Councillor Box said: "The reason it will take so long is it can't be cheap and nasty, it has got to be high quality or visitors won't stay long. "It doesn't need to be complete to be a tourist attraction, people would visit to see how it is being built.

"If you could see it from the motorway people would drive off to visit - imagine the impact this castle would have.

"The one inhibiting factor is cost. In one sense it is a good time to do it, it is an investment for the future.

"We might be eccentric but we are not naive enough to think there won't be major cost implications.

"But I do think if agencies in regeneration and heritage can be persuaded then some of the funding would be forthcoming."

A more orthodox programme of proposals for the regeneration of historic Pontefract, including the castle precincts, can be found on Wakefield Metropolitan District Councils web site; www.wakefield.gov.uk/Planning/Regeneration/FiveTowns/pontefract_town_centre.htm



Rochester Castle Conservation Management Plan: Meeting on 2 April 2009

In 2006 English Heritage and Medway County Council (who run the Rochester Castle site under a management agreement) commissioned the Paul Drury Partnership 'to produce a conservation plan for Rochester Castle'. This meeting was called jointly by the two bodies to consult on the draft plan submitted in January 2009. CSG members may be interested to see the text, which can be found on the Medway County Council website (search it under Rochester Castle and then select 'futures'). Though it was emphasised at the meeting that this is 'a collation of existing knowledge' rather than fundamentally original research, it is an extremely thorough and well-illustrated account of the site (probably the fullest as well as the most up-to-date available) and takes into account recent research – notably the papers by Jeremy Ashbee and John Goodall in the British Archaeological Association conference volume *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rochester* (ed. T.Ayers and T.Tatton-Brown, 2006).

It comes in 3 sections: an 'Executive Summary' of the plan (17 pages); *Vol.1 'Understanding and Significance'* (103 pages – perhaps of most interest to anyone who simply wants to know more about the site); *Vol.2 'Issues and Policies'* (82 pages). This report makes no attempt to summarise all its contents – apart from conservation-related proposals the author Richard Peats gives his own conclusions on many points of interpretation. Some of these (eg that the Boley Hill area outside the present site was an early outer bailey rather than a siege work) may not yet be accepted by all, or may require more work and (especially) excavation to prove the point, but are always worth taking into account.

The meeting was well attended by local and regional interests as well as the CSG and Fortress Study Group. Peter Kendall for EH emphasised the problems of balancing interdependent issues: conservation, understanding and presentation of the buildings.

He also tactfully suggested that adopting a conservation plan at all was a crucial step forward and that no plan could be applied rigidly, before urging those present not to concentrate solely on the most controversial issue – what measures should be taken to conserve the great tower/keep of c.1127-1136. The point is that water penetration and leaching out of mortar has accelerated rapidly in the last 20 to 30 years, probably because of ill-considered cement rendering in the 1960s (though other factors may be implicated too). More recently, falling stones became a hazard to visitors and the top level of the tower has been considered unsafe. Something has to be done about this as a matter of urgency. In addition there is a longer-term problem of the finely carved interior stonework being eroded simply because it is exposed to the elements within the unroofed keep (as it has been since the 17th century).

Richard Peats, for Paul Drury, summarised his findings and outlined the options: ultra-conservative conservation through to more radically re-roofing the keep to protect the interior (possibly also re-flooring it to improve access). Less controversially the basement floor, pointlessly excavated in about 1900, could be raised to its original level. It is clear that he tentatively favoured some form of the roofing option, but that this was opposed at present by English Heritage (*Summary* p.14, *Vol.2* pp.25-29) as problematic on aesthetic rather than technical grounds. Thus, within the meeting on 2 April, it was pointed out that roofing options were more flexible than used to be the case and that cases of unsuccessful or heavy-handed treatment on other sites (Falaise!) should not prejudice future decisions. On the other

hand the romantic ruin tendency was also strongly represented, and it was argued that the great open void of the keep interior was 'the monument we know and love' and so should be preserved in that form. Of course, it is not unreasonable to point out that the building has been like that for well over 300 years, since it was described by Samuel Pepys in the 1660s (the first secure evidence that the original floors and roofs had then collapsed). One factor which emerged in discussion was that complete removal of the cement rendering, along the lines now being undertaken at the Tower of London, and desirable on all other grounds, was being ruled out because of cost (2-3 million pounds already spent on just one face of the White Tower was quoted).



Inevitably, although this was an 'expert consultation' meeting (and views expressed were recorded) and wider consultation of local people had also been undertaken, a compromise had already emerged.

'Conservative' consolidation work (including selective re-pointing and improved drainage) will begin as soon as possible and be accompanied by an intensive 5-year monitoring programme to substantiate whether more radical measures will eventually be required for long-term conservation. There was more general agreement that re-roofing or re-flooring should not be undertaken just for access reasons (or to maximise the prospects of a lottery grant – re-pointing not being so easy to sell!) but only, if at all, on the basis of conservation and understanding. Bearing in mind other English cases (Castle Hedingham, Conisbrough etc) CSG members might have their own views on all this. They may also like to consider the contrast with English Heritage's plans for Dover - while accepting of course that they are very different sites.

The Rochester Castle report has many other valuable suggestions, such as the appointment of a castle archaeologist and a programme of further research and excavation into the whole site – still relatively little is known of the buildings in the bailey (as Jeremy Ashbee has pointed out). As part of the work on the wider site, it is proposed that the two surviving mural towers be made accessible, and one converted into a visitor centre. The form of the earliest Norman castle might be clarified too. But these are less debatable issues.

Richard Eales

Scargill Castle to be reopened to the public.

Ten years ago archaeologist Niall Hammond bought his wife, Caroline, a ruined medieval castle as a marriage gift. The 12th century Scargill Castle, near Barningham, County Durham was on English Heritage's at-risk register and the gatehouse, which once housed servants, was used as a garage.

But Niall and Caroline, who are both archeologists, have made restoring the building a labour of love. They now plan to turn Scargill Castle into luxury holiday accommodation – giving people a chance to experience the site's rich past. It follows excavations last year by Channel 4's Time Team, which unearthed an intriguing history and threw light on claims that Edward II once stayed there.

"I work on lots of other people's properties and it's just that little bit better to work on my own," Niall explained. "But unless the castle has an income, in 100 years it will become a ruin again. Creating a holiday let seems the best way of giving it a purpose."

Niall's interest in Scargill Castle began when he worked as an archeologist for Durham County Council. "We had tried to save the building for years. It was in a terrible state and close to falling down," said Niall, who helps run Archaeo-Environment, which is based in Lartington.

About 30 years ago, the landowner sold the site and a fence was erected around the walls. However, the new owner, who moved to Italy, was proving difficult to contact. Niall's luck changed when a shooting enthusiast bought a nearby grouse moor – the sale included the castle. The archeologist paid a mere £100 for the castle and gave his wife the deeds on their wedding day in 1999.

A castle was recorded on the site in 1180 when Warin de Scargill and his family lived there. But when the Scargill family acquired more profitable estates in the West Riding of Yorkshire, it became an estate farm. The last male in the Scargill family line died in 1531 – a fact that threw up unanswered questions.



Niall said: "Some of the oak beams were dated to about 1550, which seemed very odd. That meant extensive rebuilding had taken place." Last April, Channel 4s archeologists filmed a Time Team special at Scargill. The show was screened in January and explained the mystery.

Continues on page 8.

Continued from page 7

Evidence suggests the last in the line – Mary Scargill – had married into a wealthy family. When her husband died, she rebuilt the castle into a more fashionable Tudor house, with a fortified facade.

Time Team also discovered a defensive enclosure outside the walls and uncovered a magnificent Tudor fireplace – the centrepiece of a great hall with huge floor flagstones still in place. After its renaissance, the castle began a long decline and was later used as farm buildings among other things – including a garage in the 20th century.

The legend that Edward II stayed at Scargill has now been dismissed. The Scargill referred to by chroniclers at the time was in fact at Haverah Park, many miles further south. The sagging roof and crumbling floors and walls have now been replaced, and suitable doors and windows have been added. The old gatehouse has three floors and the building is just a few steps away from become a holiday cottage. But striking a balance between making it comfortable, but not destroying its archaeological interest will take time and money.

“We have bought a little extra ground to give the building a little more space and I hope we can get cracking in a couple of years.

“The Landmark Trust has been very successful in similar projects and that’s the model we are trying to follow.”

Funding boost for Lincoln castle scheme

A multi-million pound redevelopment of Lincoln Castle has moved a step closer after an early funding boost.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has given the county council’s £6m bid initial approval and it can now go for more detailed consideration.



Above: Lincoln Castle, Lucy Tower.

The project, which has a budget of more than £15m, would see a new exhibition centre, visitor workshops and the completion of the wall walk.

The council was also awarded more than £250,000 to develop the bid. A decision is expected in 2011.

Lincoln’s copy of the Magna Carta would be moved to the new exhibition centre in the current court building.

The Grade II* listed castle prison will also be improved with new exhibition spaces.

Blencowe Hall, Penrith Cumbria

English Heritage has now changed its view about old properties. Rather than them just being preserved as a ‘ruin’ there can now be a change of use, provided that the renovations are sympathetic. Christine Rowley, Owner, Blencowe Hall.

This magnificent manor house has acquired not one but two defensive peel towers over the centuries. One of these has remained a habitable part of the structure, but the other, the southern tower, had fallen into ruin long before the new owners bought the house. Inside it was open to the sky and fireplaces were still visible several storeys up, showing the location of the original rooms.

From the outside, the tower offers dramatic and intriguing clues to its history, including an enormous gash in the stonework – often said to be the result of an attack on the building by Parliamentary forces in the 1640s, but more probably the result of soft ground and underground water.



Above: Blencowe Hall, Cumbria.

The owners wanted the site, both a scheduled monument and grade I listed building, to be habitable, wishing to create some holiday accommodation within it.

It would once have been standard conservation practice to leave the split tower as a ruin, but English Heritage’s buildings experts and archaeologists supported the owner’s desire to bring the structure back into use. The right intervention could continue the story of this complex medieval building. A building that is being maintained because people use it has far better long-term prospects than one from which the inhabitants derive no practical benefit. Eden District Council supported this approach and so gave confidence to both the owners and their architects.

The gash in the masonry that made the ruin so spectacular has been retained, in an eye-catching form. It remains as dramatic a sight as ever but now has behind it inset glazing and balconies. Inside, new rooms have been created; the stranded fireplaces once more relate to floors and hearths, and a bold and visually arresting solution has been found to give new life to a unique part of England’s architectural history.

Ella Armitage Archive

A two-day conference was organised by The Yorkshire Archaeological Society in Leeds earlier this year entitled 'Life in Aristocratic Residences' and featured lectures and site visits to earthwork and later castle sites.

Delegates were introduced to the YAS archive of Ella Armitage's notebooks which formed part of her research material culminating in the publication of the seminal work in the history of castle studies, *'Early Norman Castles of the British Isles'* published in 1912.

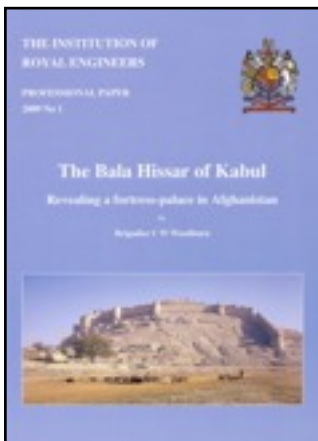
The notebooks were created over a period of some 15 years mainly in the early years of the 20th century, and describe her often arduous journeys to record earthwork castle sites throughout the UK and Ireland. The notebooks are remarkable for their detailed descriptions of a very large number of sites and also for the drawings, sketches and plans that often supplement the text. An accompanying notebook by her daughter contains drawings in exquisite detail.

Much has been written about this remarkable Yorkshire woman but some CSG members may not be aware that the archive of her diaries exists and can be viewed at the YAS headquarters in Leeds. Many of the sites described and illustrated are no longer extant and so these notebooks, produced by one of the earliest serious castle scholars, are a source of first-hand historical record of many now lost or damaged castle sites.

The 33 notebooks are catalogued in the YAS archive under reference MS521. Any member of the Castle Studies Group is welcome to visit the archive to see this material but should make an appointment first as the archivist is not always present. Contact details are: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Clarendon, 23 Clarendon Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS2 9NZ. tel: 0113 245 6362

Members Recent/Forthcoming Publications

Castle Studies Group members include academics, researchers and castle owners who publish books, articles and papers from time to time. Although many of these publications will appear in greater detail in the annual Bibliography or perhaps be reviewed in the CSG Journal, this section of the Bulletin will bring to members attention recent or forthcoming publications from within the group.



The Bala Hissar of Kabul: Revealing a fortress-palace in Afghanistan
by Bill Woodburn.

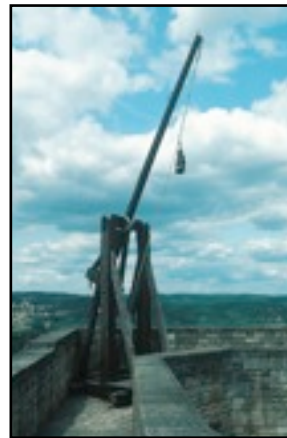
Published by The Institution of Royal Engineers, Brompton Barracks, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4UG. Available from them for the price of £5 + £1 p&p.



The Buildings of Wales, Gwynedd.
Castle entries by John Kenyon

Published by Yale University Press
ISBN: 0300141696
www.yalebooks.co.uk
Price £29.99

A History of the Early and Late Medieval Siege: 2 vol set
by Peter Purton



This magisterial survey presents a comprehensive view of the siege in the middle ages, tracing links across continents and analysing the relationship with changes in the design of town and castle defences. It considers the most important questions raised by siege warfare: who designed, built and operated siege equipment? How did medieval commanders gain their knowledge? What were the roles of theoretical texts

and the developing science of siege warfare? How did nomadic peoples acquire siege skills? Were castles and town walls built purely of a military purpose, or did they play a symbolic role also?

The first volume begins in 450 AD with the replacement of the western Roman empire by barbarian successor states, but also examines the development of the Byzantine Empire, the Muslim Caliphate and its successors, and the links with China, through to the early thirteenth century. The second continues with the Mongol conquests in Asia and Europe and the thirteenth-century apogee of pre-gunpowder siege warfare, before examining

the slow impact of guns and the cumulatively massive changes in attack and defence of the fifteenth century.



£100, due October 2009, hardback.
ISBN 978184383450 2, two volume set, 64 b/w & 29 line illus.; c.1,024pp. Vols 1 & 2 also available separately.

Published by Boydell & Brewer.

www.boydellandbrewer.com

News Europe/World

Portugal concur in restoration of Portuguese castles in Iran

An agreement has been negotiated by Portuguese Ambassador to Tehran José Manuel da Costa Arsénio and deputy director of Iran's Cultural Heritage, tourism and Handicrafts Organisation (CHTHO) Fariborz Dowlatabadi.



"From our point of view, the Portuguese castles in the Persian Gulf symbolise Iranians' valour, resistance, and struggle. In addition they should be restored for their historical and architectural value," he stated.

The Portuguese castles were constructed in southern Iran after the Portuguese viceroy Alfonso de Albuquerque attacked Hormoz Island in the Persian Gulf in 1507 during the reign of Safavid dynasty (1502–1736).

The first was built by Albuquerque on Hormoz Island (pictured above). The fact that such an important place was in foreign hands was so galling to Safavid king Shah Abbas I (1587-1629) that he eventually convinced the British East India Company to allow its ships to co operate with his land forces and wrested the island from the Portuguese in 1622.

The castle is without doubt the most impressive colonial fortress in Iran. Constructed of reddish stone on a rocky promontory at the far north end of the island, the castle was originally cut off from the rest of the island by a moat, the traces of which still remain. Although most of the roof caved in long ago, much of the lower part of the very substantial outer walls is still intact, with the remains lying on different levels of the site.

The Portuguese left several other castles on the Iranian islands of Qeshm, and Larak and in the port of Kong as legacies of their colonial exploitation in the Persian Gulf during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Romanian castle back in Habsburg's possession

Romania's Bran Castle officially became the private property of Dominic Habsburg in May this year, Romanian media reported. For the last three years, the culture ministry managed the building. The new owner, a New York architect and nephew of Romania's last king, announced he will significantly restore the castle and reopen it to the public in June 2009 as a private museum. The tourism ministry urges promotion of the castle as an important attraction.

Florence, Italy to host exhibition about Shobak Castle

One of Italy's top cultural events will go on show in Florence this summer, exploring a Middle East flashpoint region at the time of the Crusades.

Opening in mid-July, the exhibit will showcase over 100 artefacts unearthed during a 20-year archaeological project by Florence University.

The focal point of the show is Montreal Castle, known as Shobak in Arabic and Shawbak in Italian, located in a Jordanian section of the Great Rift Valley.

The castle had collapsed into a heap of ruins by the time the Italian-Jordanian archaeological project began there 20 years ago but the excavations have revealed it was once the heart of a strategic region between the two great powers of Egypt and Syria.

The castle was strategically located on the pilgrimage and caravan routes between Syria and Arabia, giving it control of all local commerce.

Although the focus will be on Montreal Castle, the exhibition will also explore the region's history at the time of the Crusades through finds unearthed at Petra.

Organisers of the exhibition, a joint project with Jordan's Department of Antiquities, said they had deliberately decided to limit the number of pieces on display in order to spotlight finds of particular significance.

The exhibition is entitled 'Da Petra a Shawbak. Archeologia di una frontiera' (From Petra to Montreal Castle. The Archaeology of a Border Region') and is on show at Palazzo Pitti from July 13 until October 19.

*Below : Bran Castle, Romania.
Photo: Sigfrid Lopez*



News Wales

Cardigan Castle is the biggest heritage project in Wales and has never had a better chance of succeeding.

A significant chapter in the long history of Cardigan Castle closed in February with the death of the castle's last private owner, Miss Barbara Wood. Miss Wood, aged 91, died at Bronesbury Lodge nursing home, Cardigan.

Miss Wood and her mother moved to Castle Green House in the 1940s. They struggled to maintain the listed Regency House and grounds which quickly fell into disrepair. A proud, independent woman, Miss Wood continued to live in the house after her mother died and entered into many lively disputes with the local authorities about the declining state of the castle famously telling Cardigan Borough Council to "go fry themselves" after they discussed compulsorily purchasing the site.

In 1984 Castle Green House was declared unfit for human habitation. Miss Wood refused the offer of a bungalow in Cardigan but agreed to the provision of a small caravan in the grounds. She became a recluse-like figure, cloistered with her numerous cats behind the crumbling castle walls. Her failing health led to her being moved to Bronesbury in 1996.

The castle lay empty and neglected for five more years until the Tivy-Side's Castle in Crisis campaign started the wheels moving to bring the castle into public ownership. Miss Wood finally sold the castle to Ceredigion County Council in 2003 for £500,000. The castle got the green light for the first stage of a £4.8m Heritage Lottery Bid submitted by local building preservation trust Cadwgan at the start of the year.

Details of the timetable for the "largest heritage project in Wales" were announced in March by the Cadwgan Building Preservation Trust in a presentation to Ceredigion County Council's Cabinet.

Geraldine Delaney, adviser to the Trust, outlined details of the project – in total worth £9.2 million – she told councillors it would directly create 14 jobs, with more to

come. "It will generate over £700,000 into the local economy and sustain many more jobs, thereby bringing economic benefit to the town and the wider area," she said. The Castle, the various buildings within it and the gardens form a "multi-functional" scheme offering events space, public access, community space and commercial holiday lets.

Ms Delaney said the Heritage Lottery Fund submission for £4.55million of the funding must be completed within 18 months, and match-funding towards the £9.2million total must also be in place by then. "And we have to have all the permissions in place by then too. From there on it is a four year project to complete the whole thing," she said.

In December 2008 the Trust was awarded just under £300,000 by the HLF to complete the detailed development towards the full submission. The final date for the confirmation of match funding and stage two submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund is July 2010. Work should then start on site in June 2011, with a schedule for completion in November 2012.

Preseli Pembrokeshire Assembly Member Paul Davies has visited Cardigan Castle to learn more about plans to restore the building. Despite working in the town for many years, Mr Davies had never been able to enter the castle before.

"It was in private ownership until 2003 and is now only open to the public on a limited basis when volunteers are working on the grounds so it was a real privilege to get inside at last,"

The castle was built in 1110 and was the site of Wales' first national eisteddfod. The Cadwgan Building Preservation Trust, who gave Mr Davies a guided tour, is now working on a bid for £4.5 million in Heritage Lottery Funding to restore the castle.

The total project will cost £9 million and aims to restore full public access and to make the castle a place to celebrate Welsh culture once again.

See Cardigan Castle Preservation Trust Website: www.cardigancastle.com



Ruperra Castle : Public Inquiry 21-24 April 2009

Those who have been following the fortunes of Ruperra Castle, Grade II* Listed Building and Scheduled Ancient Monument, will know that Caerphilly County Councillors turned down a planning application for enabling development in the grounds of the castle in December 2007, ratifying it with a greater majority vote in January 2008. This was despite the fact that their own Chief Planning Officer was in favour of the proposals.



Purchased by the current owner in 1998, the Castle and outbuildings have not benefited from any efforts to repair or stop the deterioration. They have been the subject of further actual damage without repair and they were not the subject of any planning application until 2002. Even then no application for Listed Building Consent or Scheduled Monument Consent was included. It took the owner a further four years to present the basic information necessary for the application to be presented to the Planning Committee, though still without applications for the above consents and without an archaeological report or an Environmental Impact Assessment. Little wonder it was refused.

The owner appealed against the decision in June 2008 and a four day Public Inquiry was held from April 21st-24th 2009. In his opening remarks the Inspector mentioned the importance of the English Heritage document on Enabling Development (which is valid in Wales) and of the Local Plan Guidelines on development in the countryside. The appellant's case was conducted by an advocate and by his agent, a planner introduced solely for the preparations for the appeal. He did not call on the support of any expert witnesses, or the people who had prepared his application or provided the subsequent reports.

The Appellant cited Riber Castle as a justification for enabling development, thus demonstrating the lack of appreciation of the importance of Ruperra, which he judged as being of only local significance.

Rick Turner of Cadw pointed out that the Environmental Impact assessment, initially deemed unnecessary by the Planning Division but requested by the Welsh Assembly Government, had no scoping plan and no methodology. There was no scheme of approval of archaeological works. Elisabeth Whittle considered the proposals to be highly intrusive to the landscape and gardens.

Caroline Allen, Barrister for Ruperra Castle Preservation Trust pointed out the lack of detailed provision in the application for access, paving, drainage, hedges and planting, and the lack of a management or conservation plan.

Simon Bonvoisin, Landscape Consultant for RCPT said that almost every view to and around the Castle grounds would be damaged in some way. The proposals dramatically exceed the capacity of the landscape to absorb change, and materially harmed the heritage values of the place and its setting contrary to English Heritage policy on Enabling Development, 2008.

John Thorneycroft, Conservation Consultant, deplored the lack of attempts by the owner to shore up the castle, or to make any repairs even to parts of the listed outbuildings which had been damaged during his ownership. This followed years of neglect by consecutive owners since the fire of 1941.

Jane Chamberlain, Conservation Architect considered that the Appellant's advisors had approached design criteria as if the site was a typical suburban housing site in a conservation area, losing sight of the impact on such a special historic site and natural environment. The ideal outcome for the Ruperra Castle Preservation Trust would be for the Castle and immediate landscape to be reunited with Coed Craig Ruperra (the Ruperra Conservation Trust's woodland), with the habitat for protected species protected and public access created to the whole, combined landscape, all without new build enabling development, to avoid compromising the landscape and setting.



The Inspector will send his report to the Welsh Assembly Government by the end of June 2009 and the Minister for the Environment, Sustainability, and Housing will make the final decision.

Pat Jones-Jenkins
 Hon Secretary RCPT May 2009
patjonesjenkins@googlemail.com

News Ireland

Kilmallock, to revitalise its medieval walls

Ambitious new conservation and management strategies for Kilmallock, one of Ireland's most intact Walled Towns were unveiled in May.

The reopening of the local railway station and the development of a new heritage centre in the town are just two of the many potential projects earmarked for Kilmallock as part of the town's ambitious new conservation and management strategies.

The Minister of State with responsibility for the Office of Public Works, Martin Mansergh, launched the Kilmallock Town Walls Conservation and Management Plan and Kilmallock Walled Town Public Realm Plan at a ceremony attended by members of the local action team, public representatives, local councillors and the public in Deebert House Hotel in the town.

Initiated by Limerick County Council under the Irish Walled Towns Network Action Plan 2006-08, the strategies are geared towards developing a greater appreciation of, and access to, the historic town walls, and boosting local tourism.

Among the potential projects and initiatives earmarked for the town is the development of interpretative facilities and looped heritage walkways and the reopening of the local railway station.

"The background to the study stressed the importance of public transport – getting to Kilmallock and moving around Kilmallock. One way of doing that is reopening the services to the railway station," explained consultant Nicholas De Jong, who oversaw the compilation of the Public Realm Plan. Another proposal is for access to the local towers.

"Everybody loves to get up a tower. If people could get up King John's Castle, Blossom Gate and the Collegiate church that would be fantastic, even a virtual tour," suggested Anne Thompson from engineering consultancy firm Gifford Ltd, who carried out the Conservation and Management Plan, in conjunction with PLB. "Having everything closed off is not helping. There are great vantage points," she continued.

Kilmallock was once regarded as one of the most strategically important towns in Ireland due to its medieval wall defences, castles, gatehouses and magnificent churches. The town walls, 70% of which remain standing today, have contributed greatly to Kilmallock's direct involvement in almost every Irish conflict since medieval times. The fortress town was burned during the Desmond Rebellion and the local Dominican Priory was attacked and destroyed during the Irish Confederate Wars.

Commenting at the official launch of the plans, Sarah McCutcheon, Executive Archaeologist, Limerick County Council said, "Kilmallock was a town of considerable importance in the late medieval period, ranking as one of the main urban areas in Ireland at the time. Today it is unique in County Limerick for its range of standing medieval monuments and it is foremost among an exclusive group of Irish towns and cities, which retain their medieval

defences. The Town Walls are of national significance, but their potential as a major heritage asset for the town has not been fully exploited up until now."

She noted that the Town Walls were a finite resource requiring conservation and management so as to enhance the public's appreciation of and access to them.

"The plans seek to provide Kilmallock with a greater sense of identity through the preservation of the Town Walls and the improvement of the local infrastructure. Once you achieve this you have a viable tourism product that will reap benefits for the people who live and work in Kilmallock, as well as the thousands of people who visit the Walled Town each year", added Ms. McCutcheon.

The primary objective of the Public Realm Plan is to identify specific initiatives, schemes and projects that improve the town's infrastructure with particular emphasis on its Walled Town status. The initiatives include the possible reopening of Kilmallock Railway Station, the establishment of walking loops and interpretation facilities, improvements to the existing streetscape and open spaces, and the erection of signage and visitor orientation (including artwork) at strategic locations within and on the approaches to the Town".



Above: King's Castle, Kilmallock, Co Limerick

Paul Kerrigan

Members, especially those from Ireland, will be saddened to learn of the death of Paul Kerrigan in June 2009. Paul was the author of 'Castles and fortifications of Ireland 1485-1945' published in 1995, as well as many other papers and articles on fortifications. He will be greatly missed.

The Offaly Castles Laser Scanning Project

Between 2007 and 2008, Offaly County Council commissioned the survey of 7 castles in Co. Offaly, utilising ground based 3D Laser Scanning survey technology. The work was prioritised after a comprehensive site survey in 2006 of each of the county's 201 castles.



Above: *Ballycowan Castle, Co Offaly. (photo: Ilja Klutman)*

In partnership with Gridpoint Solutions Ltd, Offaly County Council Heritage Office have launched a public online archive of castles surveyed as part of the Offaly Castles Laser Scanning Project. The site will form a unique resource detailing the castle sites as they stand at present and preserving the sites as digital archive for the future. For the first time in Ireland 7 castles surveyed using 3D laser scanning technology will be publically available to view, measure, and analyse on the web using a simple to use panoramic scan data viewer. In addition to the digital castle viewer, location maps, site images, 3D laser scan point-cloud images, 2D plans, sections and elevations will be available on the site to view and download.

At present 2 castles are available to view on the site with the remaining sites to be uploaded soon.

This site allows for the first time in Ireland access to the castle scan archive through a interactive plug-in and the archive drawings created from the point-cloud data.

The survey project at present contains seven selected castles which were all appropriate for scanning and are now digitally recorded and referenced for the future. The project

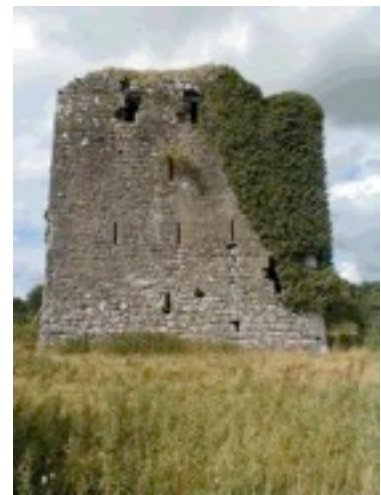
highlighted how few castles actually survive to a significant degree and the important role of 3D archive in conserving our built heritage.

This project was carried out under the Offaly Heritage Plan 2007 - 2011 with funding from the Heritage Council.

Tipperary castle withdrawn after failing to reach reserve at auction

A LONDON auction house failed to raise interest in a cut-price 15th century castle in Tipperary in the Spring.

Ballyfinboy Castle, near Borrisokane, described by the auctioneers as "steeped in history, set amidst superb countryside", was withdrawn after bids failed to reach the disclosed reserve price of £100,000. Bidding started at £80,000 but auctioneer Robin Cripp of Andrews and Robertson stopped after seven bids, which failed to reach higher than £93,000.



Those attending the auction in the faded elegance of the Connaught Rooms near Holburn, preferred instead to save their money for a succession of flats, terraced houses and even small shops, at prices ranging from £100,000 to £400,000. Ten holiday homes in Benalmadena on the Costa del Sol were also withdrawn after sluggish interest.

Asked if it was always going to be a challenge selling a dilapidated castle in Tipperary with no planning permission in the middle of a recession, a spokesman for the auctioneers, Jeremy Lamb said that it was for sale at a difficult time "but it's a question of reaching the right person. No one was quite bullish enough to take it on today."

He added that 14 people had downloaded the legal documents relating to the sale online, so there had been "a certain amount of speculative interest" in advance.

The owner of the castle, described as an Irish property investor, did not attend the auction, but would have been able to follow proceedings live on the internet. The auction house is awaiting instructions from the vendor on whether to try again in their next sale in June. The property, which has been on the market for a number of years has seen its asking price more than halved, from €250,000 in 2006.

Ballyfinboy Castle was built by the O'Kennedy clan in about 1480 but was captured by the Earl of Essex in 1599 when its owner Philip Kennedy and all defenders were put to the sword.

It has been uninhabited for more than 400 years. Ballyfinboy Castle also possesses a magnificent 'sheela-na-gig' carved in relief on a quoin stone of the building.

Website of Italian castles - in English

Members of CSG will be familiar with many of the vast number of web-sites covering castles. The quality and content varies enormously but this one has been brought to our attention as a particularly good and useful one covering castles of the Italian regions of Friuli, Venezia and Giulia.

Take a look at www.consorziocastelli.it



Scotland's National Collections online

Scotland's unique national collections are now available for the first time on a new website, SCOTLANDSIMAGES.COM. High resolution images, many of which are previously unpublished, can now be downloaded for licensed use from the collections of RCAHMS, The National Archives of Scotland, The National

Library of Scotland, National Museums Scotland and The National Trust for Scotland.

George Mackenzie, Keeper of the Records of Scotland explains: "Scotland has a wonderfully rich, well maintained and well-researched set of national collections. Now, for the very first time, we have a one-stop-shop for commercial users to access images of these outstanding treasures. SCOTLANDSIMAGES.COM offers a streamlined service with increased search capability to picture editors, publishers and designers."



CALL FOR PAPERS

"A House Such as Thieves Will Knock At"

The Tower as Late Medieval Lordly Residence

**School of History and Politics, University of Stirling
12-13 June 2010**

Across Europe, the tower is recognised as the dominant physical expression of lordship in the late medieval and early modern periods. Most research on towers has focussed on their architectural origins and stylistic development but more recent studies have addressed their place within aristocratic society more widely. The aim of this conference is to examine the place of the tower in its wider physical, cultural and social landscapes; the economic and social structures within and around the tower; and planning and function of the buildings.

Proposals are invited for papers on any aspect of the above topics. Please submit an abstract of up to 300 words to Prof Richard Oram, Dept of History, University of Stirling, FK9 4LA – rdo1@stir.ac.uk – by 30 September 2009. The language of the conference will be English and all papers should be delivered in English.

Left: Preston Tower, Lothian, Scotland.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attendees at next years CSG Conference may wish to start some pre-visit reading. The organisers of the conference, Beryl Coe and David Bartlett, have supplied the following references:

Books - the Mike Salter volume on "*The Castles of Wessex*" covers almost all the sites.

"*Somerset Castles*" by Robert Dunning (Somerset Books 1995) is more detailed for Somerset. Copies can be obtained from Clive at Keeble Antiques, Cheapside, Langport, Somerset TA10 9PW, reduced to £2.99 plus p&p. Tel 01458 259627, email clive@keebleantiques.com (He says he has all the remaining copies!)

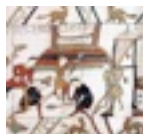
For more detailed information on individual sites please refer to John Kenyon's *Bibliography*. Anyone planning to spend some extra time in the area before or after the conference would find "*A Field Guide to Somerset Archaeology*", by Lesley and Roy Adkins (Dovecote Press 1992) very useful.

Castles of the Teutonic Knights 2010



Above: *Malbork Castle, Poland.*

This is an advance announcement for a week-long CSG field trip to **northern Poland** led by **Dr. Robert Bubczyk** that is planned around 14th-21st August 2010. The trip is shaping up to be very good but is still in the planning stage and both a detailed itinerary and costs have yet to be finalised. Details will be sent out with the forthcoming *Journal*. If you would like to have advance notice of the itinerary and cost, however, please register your interest (without commitment) by emailing the Secretary at secretary@castlestudiesgroup.org.uk and information will be emailed to you as soon as it becomes available.



DIARY DATES

Conference - 25/26 September 2009, London Dover Castle Great Tower

English Heritage is engaged in a major project aimed at the re-presentation of the great tower (or keep) at Dover Castle. Primarily, this will reveal the tower's original function as an occasional but magnificent fortress-palace for the itinerant royal household. The great tower will reopen to the public in August 2009.

The creation of a series of period interiors for the re-presentation would not have been possible without a large body of new research. The 'Great Tower' conference will bring together the results of this research, fieldwork, and other contextual investigation. All of the speakers are leading scholars and specialists in the field, and the sessions will shed much new light on the building, development and function of this great monument of English history.

The conference will take place over two days at the Society of Antiquaries in London, September 25 -26, followed by an optional third day at Dover, where delegates can explore and discuss the great tower in the company of the conference speakers. Further details from English Heritage **Tel: 020 7973 3880**

The 2010 Annual CSG Conference The Castles of West Wessex, 8 - 11 April 2010

Next years CSG Conference will be based in Taunton, Somerset, staying at the Holiday Inn, Taunton - sadly the Castle Hotel is not big enough and far too costly! The itinerary covers castles in Somerset and parts of Dorset and Wiltshire

Provisional programme:

Thursday (late afternoon) :Taunton castle.

Friday : Mere, Old Wardour, Farleigh Hungerford, Nunney, Wells Bishop's Palace (plus quick look at the cathedral and houses of the Vicars' Choral, if time allows)

Saturday : Corfe, Sherborne, Montacute, Neroche.

Sunday (part day) : Over Stowey, Nether Stowey, Stogursey, Dunster.

(Please note it may not be possible to access some parts of Taunton because of building work, or the interior of Stogursey if they have a holiday let - we will not know until the last minute. Still plenty to see!)

Taunton is easily accessed by car, train or coach. Fly to either Bristol or Exeter - details of connections, costs and further information will be included with the booking form supplied with the *Journal* mailing in December/January.