



THE CASTLE STUDIES GROUP BULLETIN

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CSG Bulletin Editor

This year will see your current *Bulletin* editor, Peter Burton, standing down from the role after eight years. We are therefore hoping that a volunteer will come forward from within the CSG membership to take over the position of *Bulletin* editor.

Anyone who might be interested in compiling a regular castle related newsletter on behalf of members is warmly encouraged to make contact with the CSG Chair, Gillian Scott (secretary@castlestudiesgroup.org.uk), the Journal Editor, Neil Guy (editor@castlestudiesgroup.org.uk) or indeed any of the committee to find out what the role entails.

As well as providing a valued source of information and news for CSG members, the role of *Bulletin* editor can also be rewarding for the editor themselves through the contacts they will make and by keeping abreast of castle news and events.

The current *Bulletin* is compiled and distributed twice a year but the scope, frequency and format of the *Bulletin* under the new editor will be open to development and revision, perhaps extending the group's social media presence, depending upon the person's own preferences.

If a new editor can be found in response to this appeal they will hopefully be able to take over straight away but Peter is willing to produce one more *Bulletin* in September if required.

CSG Committee

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Jazirat Fara'un Castle

CSG members pose for a photograph during the Crusader Castles of Jordan study tour in October 2016. The leader, Prof. Denys Pringle, is seated in the left-foreground.

Jazirat Fara'un Castle is located on a small island in the Gulf of Aqaba in the Red Sea, and is actually within Egyptian territorial waters.

The castle has been much restored by the Egyptian authorities (lower left). Its appearance in 1917 can be seen in the photo (lower right), taken by T.E. Lawrence. (© IWM)



NEWS WALES

Harlech Castle sees large rise in visitor numbers



This February saw the official opening of Harlech Castle's new Education Resource Centre which marks the completion of a £6m project to refurbish the castle visitor facilities. Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates, who performed the official opening, also stated that the investment at Harlech Castle has resulted in an increase of more than 35% in visitors to the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Among the changes made to the castle was the instalment of a "floating" footbridge which allowed visitors to enter the site through the original entrance for the first time in more than 600 years.

Also benefitting from the investment was the former Harlech Castle hotel which saw the ground floor transformed into a modern visitor centre complete with a shop,



Welsh Government Cabinet Member Ken Skates pictured on the new 'floating bridge' at Harlech Castle.

café, toilets and interpretation area, while the first and second floors were refurbished into five-star apartments. The project has generated nation-wide praise since its completion, receiving recognition at the regional and all-Wales Local Authority Building Control Awards,

as well as winning the Institution of Civil Engineers' coveted George Gibby Heritage Award. It was also highly commended at the 2016 British Construction Industry Awards in the Building of the Year (up to £10m) category and is named a finalist for the 2017 Civic Trust Awards.

"The aim of this project was to better present the Castle's history and improve its visitor offer to create a first-class heritage attraction to reflect its World Heritage Site status," Mr Skates said. "The redevelopment has established Harlech as a year-round, all-weather destination with the aim of extending the tourism season into the shoulder season. Driving commercial success of this nature is a principal behind the work on Historic Wales and these astonishing achievements at Harlech demonstrate what is to be won.

The work at Harlech is part of the country wide Heritage Tourism Project (HTP), which has supported 40 historic sites across Wales since its launch in 2009. The project, which focuses on enhancing visitor experiences and attracting new audiences to Welsh heritage sites, has delivered new displays and interpretation, better access, and collaborations with local arts organisations to bring the sites to life. The increase in visitors has seen income rise by 69% and the refurbished shop has welcomed a sales increase of 439%.

Mr Skates added "Across Wales, our historic environment supports more than 30,000 jobs and contributes over £840m to Wales's economy each year, so it's vital that we continue to invest in strengthening our heritage tourism offer to attract even more visitors. The outcome of the HTP project demonstrates first-hand how these developments can have a positive impact in attracting new audiences and enhancing the experience, while giving our historic sites a sustainable future."

Readers of this news item might be interested to read a related 'opinion piece' in respect of heritage tourism on page 19

Hay Castle

Further investigations have taken place on the grounds in preparation for the start of works later this year. A drill team was commissioned to determine the depth of the natural bedrock, which in this area is Raglan Mudstone.

The information gathered by the team will inform structural and drainage solutions.

photo: Hay Castle Trust

Hay Castle Trust has received planning permission for their ambitious development project. They have announced preparations for the next stage, which includes tendering for a lead contractor. After the construction contract has been awarded, the work will hopefully begin later this year.

The planning permission, issued by Brecon Beacons National Park, includes 19 conditions, which is not unusual for a project of this scope and sensitivity. The conditions include the presence of an archaeologist during ground works, an ecological and tree protection plan, construction of a 'bat cave' and bat monitoring, and restrictions on delivery and working hours.

The permission covers the restoration and change of use of Hay Castle to create a public venue for education and the arts, and includes re-roofing the derelict section of the mansion, construction of an education space, gallery space, stairs and lift, cafe in the old coach house, viewing platform and lower floor in the Norman keep, removal and conservation of the great gates, and steps from the gate to Market Square.

2017 has brought welcome news on the fundraising front with the receipt of a major grant of £200,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation. This grant will be used to redevelop and vitalise the Castle to create a vibrant cultural centre. The Garfield Weston Foundation is a family-founded, grant-making trust that has been supporting charities across the UK for over 50 years and is hugely supportive of the fact that the Hay Castle project will bring economic and social benefits to the area.

Due to the historic nature of the site, the works also require Listed Building Consent and Scheduled Monument Consent, in addition to the planning permission.



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Ruthin Castle Conservation Trust

It has just been announced (March 2017), that CSG Wales representative and committee member, Dr John Kenyon, has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Ruthin Castle Conservation Trust. John's extensive knowledge of Welsh castles, their history, architecture and conservation, and his wider understanding of medieval Wales generally will add significantly to the breadth of expertise within the trustees.



The Conservation Trust at Ruthin Castle is a new charitable trust set up specifically for the restoration, preservation and preventative maintenance of the Ruthin Castle Estate including the 13th Century castle, the 'castle mansion', auxiliary buildings and historical walls and grounds

and for engagement with the local community and other interested parties, by way of access and educational involvement. The latter aim including co-operation with regional schools and higher education colleges to raise the skill-sets and knowledge within the local workforce.

In order to achieve its goals, The Conservation Trust aims to raise funding from all available sources and create sustainable commercial sources of revenue within the overall conservation project, to ensure that ongoing maintenance is provided for.

Further details about the Trust can be found on their website: <http://www.ruthincastleconservationtrust.org/index.php>

Geophysical survey at Pembroke Castle

Dyfed Archaeological Trust, with TF Industries Ltd, carried out geophysical survey at Pembroke Castle during May 2015. The project was led by Neil Ludlow and funded through a grant from the Castle Studies Trust. Survey comprised magnetometry, resistivity and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR).

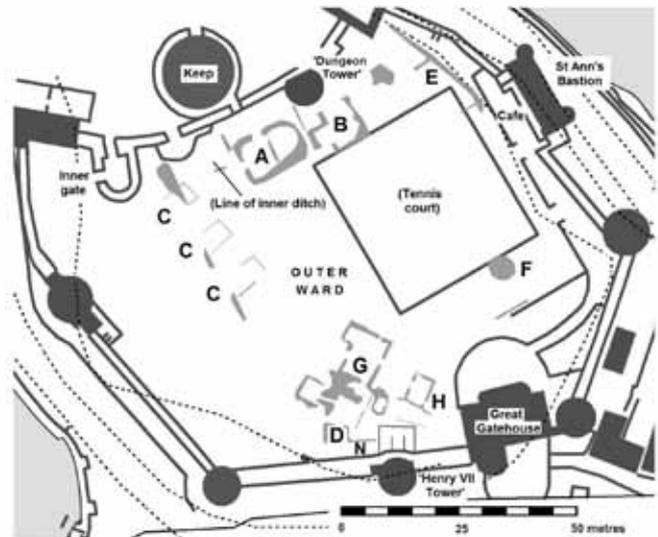
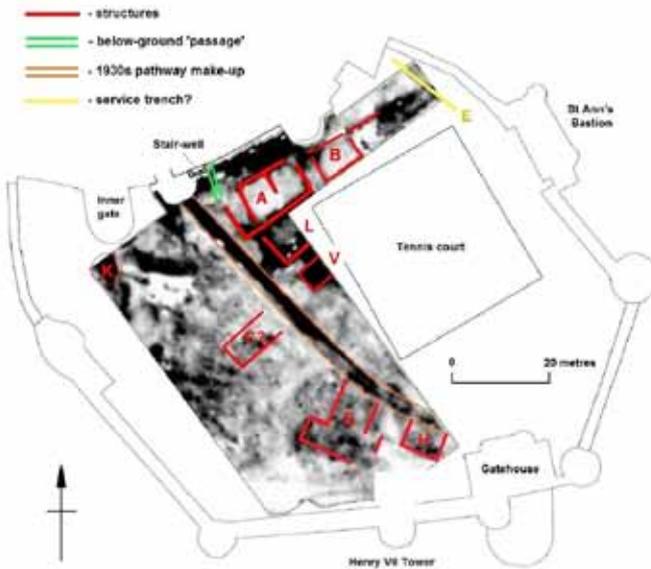
Pembroke Castle outer ward: parchmarks and geophysical surveys.

© Dyfed Archaeological Trust

A number of below-ground features, including former buildings, had previously been recorded as parchmarks/cropmarks through routine aerial photography by Toby Driver of RCAHMW (see *CSG Bulletin* 18, 2-6). Most of these were also recorded through

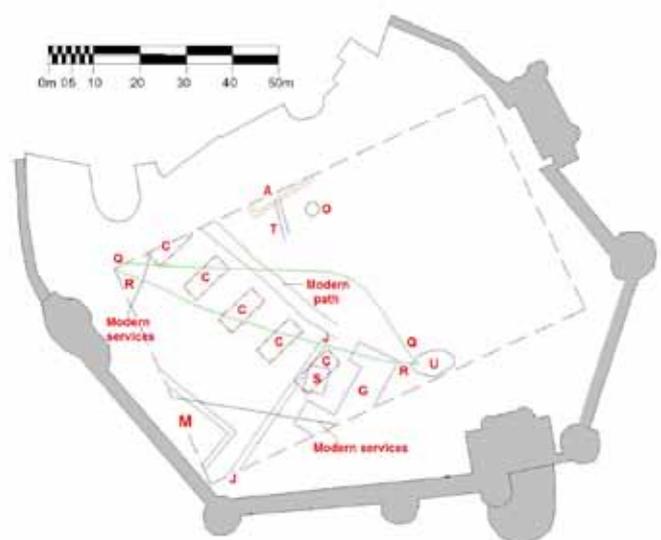
Resistivity data

Parchmarks (RCAHMW)



Processed magnetometry and resistivity data

Processed GPR data



the geophysical surveys, along with a number of further features. These include -
 Inner ward: suggestions of two or possibly three buildings, none of which can be dated or characterised.

Outer ward: A linear feature **J**, which may represent the boundary of a burgage plot established before the outer ward was laid out over part of the town; possible bridge abutment **K**; a large, medieval rectangular building **M** against the southwest curtain wall,

and a possible smaller lean-to *N* against the southern curtain; the possible site of the main castle well *O*; the free-standing, winged mansion-house *G* and associated building *H*, probably from the late fifteenth century (described in *CSG Bulletin* 18, 2-5); two buildings *A* and *B*, possibly from the seventeenth century, one of them associated with a below-ground ‘passage’ that may be a Civil War gunpowder magazine; five buildings *C* representing ‘Hall-huts’ constructed for the troops that occupied the castle during the Second World War. In addition were a number of more indeterminate features, some of which may be medieval and some possibly earlier, perhaps representing prehistoric occupation of the site.

Contrary to expectations, the results suggest that the outer ward was largely empty of medieval buildings and structures. This may have been deliberate. A change of status may have occurred under which it became progressively ‘gentrified’, culminating with the erection of the winged house in the late fifteenth century. Alternatively, it may have been intended to be an open space from the first, possibly - at least in part - to house campaigning armies and/or assemblies of various kinds.

The full report can be accessed on the Castle Studies Trust website http://www.castlestudiestrust.org/docs/Pembroke_Castle_Geophysical%20Survey_FINAL.pdf.

Neil Ludlow

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DIARY DATES
Wressle Castle open days
17th & 18th June 2017

Wressle Castle in East Yorkshire will be open to visit on the following dates between 11am - 4pm each day.

- Saturday 17th June
- Sunday 18th June
- Saturday 15th July
- Sunday 16th July

These are the only dates this year that this privately owned castle will be open to the public. There will be an opportunity to donate to a local charity in lieu of an admission charge. Visitors are advised to wear sturdy footwear as you will have to walk over a (grass) field to access the castle. <https://wresslecastle.org/about/visiting/>



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CSG Study Day, Hornby Castle, North Yorkshire
Saturday October 21st 2017

This study day will allow delegates a unique opportunity to visit the archaeological excavations currently in progress at this very interesting but little known castle.

The morning will be taken by two lectures outlining the history of Hornby Castle and its designed landscape. After a lunch break, delegates will visit the exterior and grounds of the 15th century courtyard castle and the excavations of the earlier moated structure at Hornby. A guided visit to the associated church of St. Mary’s will conclude the day.



The study day will be based in the village hall of Hackforth, near Bedale which is within a short walking distance of Hornby Castle where the field visits will take place.

Full details can be found on page 13.

NEWS ENGLAND

Historic England's *Heritage at Risk Registers*

In October the latest Registers were published and are available online from Historic England's website (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/heritage-at-risk-2016-registers/>).

In regard to the medieval castles, fortified houses and palaces recorded in the Gatehouse gazetteer 17 sites were removed, 12 added and one returned to the registers in 2016. There are now 262 sites, a drop of 1.5%. This is part of a continuing trend for the number of sites at risk to reduce. It is to be hoped this does represent a genuine reduction in the risk to the surviving medieval fortifications although other factors, such as the effectiveness of monitoring and recording by county archaeologists during a period which coincides with a time when county councils have been under considerable financial pressure with effects on their archaeological services, have to also be considered in regard to these figures.



Sites removed

- Brougham Hall Cumbria
- Naworth Castle, Cumbria
- Stydd Hall, Derbyshire
- Fenwick Moat Hill, Doncaster
- Wressle Castle, East Riding of Yorkshire
- Stansted Mountfitchet Castle, Essex
- Taynton Parva, Gloucestershire
- The Camp, Much Dewchurch, Herefordshire
- Steeton Hall, Steeton, North Yorkshire
- Chesterwood Bastles, Northumberland
- Clennell Street Cross Dyke, Northumberland
- Tarncliffe Castle, Northumberland
- Forbury Hill, Reading
- Marche Hall, Shropshire (removed after just one year on the *Register*)
- Beaudesert Castle, Henley, Warwickshire
- Crookbarrow Hill, Worcestershire (removed after just one year on the *Register*)
- Leigh Castle Green, Worcestershire (removed after just one year on the *Register*)

Sites added

- The Castles, Kilkhampton, Cornwall - Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Scrub/tree growth.
- Barlborough Hall, Derbyshire. Impressive stone porch of c. 1583-4, attributed to Robert Smythson, as suffered significant erosion.
- Calverley Old Hall, West Yorkshire. Owned by the Landmark Trust and generally improving but the unoccupied buildings, however, are generally in poor condition and the timber-framed solar wing is of particular concern as a result of ongoing water ingress.
- Crayke Castle, North Yorkshire. - Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Animal burrowing - localised/limited.
- Astwell Castle, Northamptonshire. The three storey gatehouse tower represents the sole standing remains of the C15 house. A survey has identified the structural defects including significant cracking in the tower.
- South Middleton Moor, Northumberland. (a pre-historic camp wrongly identified as a motte and bailey in 1967) Generally satisfactory but with significant localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Bracken.
- Bury Castle, Brompton Regis, Somerset. Generally satisfactory but with significant

- localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Bracken.
- Castle Neroche, Somerset. Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Scrub/tree growth.
- Bury Bank, Stone, Staffordshire. (An Iron Age hillfort with a long reputation of being the site of a Saxon palace/castle) Generally unsatisfactory with major localised problems. Trend declining. Principal vulnerability - Scrub/tree growth.
- Mettingham Castle, Suffolk. Many elements of structure in need of consolidation. Repairs completed in 2009 to Keep and part of curtain wall. Further repairs needed to Gatehouse and related parts of curtain wall. A grant application to HE for this is about to be submitted.
- West Horsley Place, Surrey. Country house, C15 timber-framed hall and domestic wing. The house has suffered from deferral of maintenance under private ownership and now stands in need of a major renovation.
- Clarendon Palace, Wiltshire. Remains of the 13th century Royal Palace. The masonry and stonework is in a deteriorating state following excavations in the 1930s and 1960s. The trenches were not backfilled, leaving masonry vulnerable to weathering and frost damage. Historic England are currently working on a partnership project with the estate and other stakeholders to implement various conservation measures.
- Edgar Tower, Worcester. Gatehouse of the Worcester Cathedral Precincts. Survives as a gatehouse tower that was rebuilt between 1300 and 1335, remodelled in 1369 and restored during the late 19th century. The gatehouse is constructed from coursed red sandstone with a concealed tile roof. There have been falls of sandstone and structural instability. The south side is under repair and the north side yet to be organised.

Castle Neroche,
Somerset.

An 'at-risk' castle site, visited by CSG in 2010 during the Castles of West Wessex conference.

Photo. Philip Davis.



The scheduled monument aspect of Holditch Court, Thorcombe, Dorset has been on the *Register* since before 2009 but the listed three storied roofless rectangular plan tower has been added following some falls of masonry into the interior.

This does seem to be generally good news, with the major castles of Wressle, Naworth, Tarset and Beaudesert removed from the *Register*. Of the sites added a number have some plans for restorative action. There do remain some 250 sites on the *Register*, most of which have no action plans and which continue to deteriorate.

The principal risk remains neglect but it is interesting to see that at Clarendon Palace archaeologists are identified as part of the problem.

A complete listing can be seen at <http://www.gatehouse-gazetteer.info/Indexes/HRRindex.html>

Philip Davis

Paul Holme Tower receives funding boost

Paul Holme Tower, East Yorkshire. Interior view of tower taken several years ago before restoration work began.

Photo: Philip Davis

A site long on the *Heritage at Risk Register* is the 15th century brick tower at Paul Holme just east of Hull, East Yorkshire. This is the surviving remains of what was originally the solar block of a moated H form manor house.

Simon Taylor, the owner of the tower for the last 25 years, although he now describes himself as the guardian of the site, has negotiated with Historic England over many years but was given a grant of £160,000 to restore the tower in December 2016.

This is further to a smaller grant given in 2014 for emergency work. The restoration work on the tower, which has already started, is expected to be complete by September 2017.



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Development plans approved for Clifford's Tower, York

In October 2016 York City Council planning department gave consent for English Heritage to go ahead with its £2.5 million scheme to build a visitor centre and viewing platform at Clifford's Tower, the unique 13th-century quatrefoil plan building on top of the motte of York Castle.

Artist's impression of the proposed new visitor centre at Clifford's Tower.

© English Heritage



English Heritage had intended to start work on this back in November but the plans have caused some controversy and, after a crowdfunded challenge by independent city councillor Johnny Hayes, that planning process is subject to a judicial review at the High Court.

Councillor Hayes had urged the planning committee to reject the plans. "It reminds me of a toilet block but it is not the building at issue, it is the position at the base of the mound that people are objecting to," he said.

In response, council planning officers said the proposed work, which includes new viewing platforms within the tower itself, would have the potential to "greatly enhance" the visitor experience. Councillor John Galvin said: "Historically it is an iconic building but there is nothing there to tell you about it. People demand and expect to have decent interpretation of historic buildings."

Dr Jeremy Ashbee, Head Curator of Properties at English Heritage, said: "An enormous amount of care was taken in preparing the planning application, in consultation with planners, designers and members of the public. We are investing in one of York's most iconic landmarks. The aim of this project is to tell the fascinating history of Clifford's Tower and its place in



Clifford's Tower by L.S. Lowry, 1952. This vista has for many decades been a defining image of York city.

© The Lowry Estate

Photo from either the late C19 or early C20 showing that the front of the mound was cut into when Clifford's Tower was part of HM Prison, York.

This supports Jeremy Ashbee's point that the new visitor centre is not damaging actual medieval remains.

photo: Philip Davis collection.



the city in a way that's never been told before.”

Following the outcry at the planning approval, including a 3,780-signature petition, a further public consultation with the residents of York was held at the end of January 2017, where key members of the Clifford's Tower Revealed Project Team presented the scheme to the audience.

Clifford's Tower, situated between the River Ouse and the River Foss in the heart of York, is currently famous for offering superb views over the city. In the proposed scheme a timber structure will be installed to partially cover the ruin and provide a viewing and activity space at roof level. Suspended metal walkways will give access to previously unseen features at first floor level, enhance access to the roof and help visitors explore the tower.

At ground level, a new single-storey stone and glass visitor centre will be set into the mound. As well as improving access at the tower's entrance, it will reveal part of the substantial perimeter wall which has been buried since 1935.

Some have questioned the legitimacy of setting the new building within the base of the ancient motte. Jeremy Ashbee explains, "The section of the mound we will use was put there in the 19th century - it's not original". These are interesting times at English Heritage.

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Hylton Castle. General view showing the surviving gatehouse with its ornate facade.

Hylton Castle, Sunderland

Members will recall that Hylton Castle was visited by the CSG in 2012 (see *Journal 26* 133-140). The late 13th century gatehouse, with its elaborate heraldic stone carved decoration has strong echoes with nearby Lumley Castle, although its subsequent history is rather different. While Lumley has a secure life as a grand hotel, Hylton has had a history of much refurbishment, gutting of interiors, 'scenic' restorations and periods of neglect.



The Hylton Castle Project, a conglomerate of organisations concerned with

Hylton Castle. Carved heraldic detailing to the rear of the gatehouse. The magnificent 'Hart' probably represents the arms of King Richard II.



Right. Interior of the gatehouse at Hylton, prior to any restoration work.

Photos. Philip Davis

the castle are, as of 1 March 2017, about to start the work of inserting free standing floors into the gatehouse structure, providing access to the roof and interpretation space and other facilities within the gatehouse. This work is planned to be completed in the summer of 2018.

The windows of the castle should be opened up. It is to be hoped this work will secure the castle and lead to its removal from the *Heritage at Risk Register*, open up the interior and roof structures for examination and study and provide a focus for community activity.



The castle and surrounding area have undergone a fair amount of archaeological and geophysical investigation in recent years although, at the moment, those investigations do not seem to have yet been consolidated into a publication. The Hylton Castle Project website is hyltoncastle.org.uk/

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Skipsea Castle was built on Iron Age mound, excavation reveals

Archaeologists have discovered that a 40-foot mound in Yorkshire, thought to be a Norman castle motte, is actually a unique Iron Age monument, built 2,500 years ago.

University of Reading archaeologists say that Skipsea Castle in Yorkshire is actually more similar to Silbury Hill in Wiltshire than a Norman Conquest-era ‘motte and bailey’ castle, as previously thought.

The discovery of the ‘Silbury Hill of the North’ makes Skipsea Castle a unique Iron Age monument in Britain. Previously, only smaller burial mounds from this period were known about. The closest mound of a similar size is in Germany.

Dr Jim Leary, the University of Reading archaeologist who led the excavation, said: “To say that the discovery of an Iron Age monument hiding in plain sight was surprising is an understatement. Castle mottes exist up and down the country, but their huge size means they are rarely excavated and as a result much of what we previously thought we knew about their date was based on scant documentary evidence and guesswork.

Skipsea Castle, East Yorkshire.



“I excavated Silbury in Wiltshire in 2008, and now to discover the Silbury Hill of the North is wonderful. It adds so much more to our understanding of the people who lived in Britain 500 years before the Romans arrived.”

The discovery was made using a novel technique to investigate, for the first time, some of the best known mottes in England, to learn more about when they were built or re-used. Working alongside colleagues at the Scottish Environmental Research Centre at East Kilbride, the team from Reading have shown that although the majority of the mounds investigated so far were built in the period immediately after the Norman Conquest in 1066, there are some remarkable exceptions.

Radiocarbon dating has shown that some mounds were built centuries later than expected. However, Skipsea Castle mound in Yorkshire was already 1,500 years old at the time of the Norman Conquest.

The new results show that this huge mound - which is 85m in diameter and stands 13m high - dates to the middle of the Iron Age and therefore unique in Britain at the time, with only a handful of parallels on the Continent.

Jim Leary added: “Our work continues for another year and we will continue to add to our knowledge of castle mounds. With luck, we might even find more prehistoric mounds in Britain, hiding from us in plain sight.”

To recover dateable material locked within these monuments, the archaeologists drilled small boreholes through the tops of each mound down to their bases.

Dr Leary said: “These boreholes act like a giant apple corer providing us with a complete sequence through the fabric of the mounds with minimal disruption. From this we are able to recover material for laboratory analysis, whilst at the same time

On site information panel, Skipsea Castle.



preserving the integrity of the monuments for generations to come.”

From tiny pieces of evidence, such as charred seeds or pollen, the archaeologists have been able to reconstruct the environment the mounds were built in, while organic material has been radiocarbon dated revealing the age of the mottes.

The project, entitled “Extending Histories: from medieval mottes to prehistoric round mounds”, is being funded by the Leverhulme Trust, and runs for another year. Details of the project and updates

can be found at: <https://roundmoundsproject.wordpress.com/>

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CASTLE STUDIES TRUST



Castle Studies Trust Awards Five Grants to Advance the Understanding Castles

The Castle Studies Trust is delighted to announce the award of five grants, totalling £21,000:

- **Castle Pulverbatch Shropshire, England** - geophysical and photogrammetric surveys of this motte and bailey castle. Abandoned by c.1200 this has the potential for us to advance our understanding of early castles along the Welsh border.
- **Clifford, Herefordshire England** - one of the earliest castles in the UK and one of the most important along the Welsh border. The geophysical survey and excavations, along with separately funded building analysis, will help understand the morphology of this little understood site. The CSG visited it as part of the 2016 annual conference. *Please note this is a privately owned site and not accessible to the general public.*

Castle Pulverbatch, Shropshire.

photo: CST



- **Dinas Bran, Denbighshire, Wales** - co-funding with Cadw a geophysical survey of the most complete, but little understood, native Welsh built castle to discover what structures lie beneath the surface.
- **Fotheringhay, Northants, England** - with almost nothing left above ground the geophysical and earthwork surveys will help shed light on the form of the castle with strong royal associations, in particular the C15 palace associated with the House of York and birthplace of Richard III. *Please note this is a privately owned site and not accessible to the general public.*
- **Lathom, Lancashire, England** - analysis of castle masonry from the completely destroyed late C15 castle built by Thomas, Lord Stanley either found via excavations or reused in the current building. This will help understand what the castle looked like

and early Tudor palaces around London, like Richmond.

Please note this is a privately owned site and not accessible to the general public.

Donate to attend exclusive site visits

Leoni's classic Palladian Lathom House on the site of the original Medieval Palace Fortress. Only the West Wing now remains.

photo: CST

By making a substantial one off donation or setting up a standing order you will be not only be able to help fund more exciting projects like the ones above but also:



a) Visit sites not accessible to the general public. Four

out of the five projects this year are on private land

b) Get exclusive previews and insight on the projects from the project teams before everyone else

You can donate:

- By credit or debit card by going to <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/castlestudiestrust>
- By cheque (made payable to the Castle Studies Trust) or standing order - completing the attached form and return either along with the gift aid form if applicable to the address on the forms at: <http://castlestudiestrust.org/Donate.html>

2016 projects finished

Clifford's Castle, Herefordshire. Masonry on the motte top may be the remains of a postern gate.

photo: CST

Both projects funded by the CST in 2016 have been completed on time and their reports are now live on the Castle Studies Trust website. Key findings include:



Pembroke - confirmation that the parch marks in the out bailey as seen in the aerial photo were those of a possible Tudor mansion and the discovery of two or possibly three previously unknown buildings in the inner ward

Caus - the discovery of a possible outer bailey separate from outer enclosure which has often been assumed to be the outer bailey.

While our 2015 project, on **Pleshey**, should finish in March 2017. However, the wait has been worthwhile with some exciting new interpretations coming from the review of the existing archive.

To find out more about all the projects we have funded this year and the Pembroke and Caus reports please visit our website www.castlestudiestrust.org or contact the chair of trustees, Jeremy Cunnington, at admin@castlestudiestrust.org

**CSG Study Day, Hornby Castle, Nr Bedale, Wensleydale, North Yorkshire.
Saturday, 21st October 2017. 10.00 - 16.00**

This study day will allow delegates a unique opportunity to visit the archaeological excavations currently in progress at this very interesting but little known castle. The morning will be taken by two lectures outlining the history of Hornby Castle and its associated designed landscape. After a lunch break, delegates will visit the exterior and grounds of the 15th century courtyard castle and the excavations of the earlier moated structure at Hornby and its landscape. A guided visit to the associated church of St. Mary's will conclude the day.

Refreshments are included in the cost but delegates must bring their own lunch or take lunch at the Greyhound Inn. Kitchen facilities and hot drinks will be available in the village hall where the study day is based.

The study day will be led by Erik Matthews who is the Fieldwork Co-Ordinator for the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland. He manages the on-going archaeological fieldwork project at Hornby Castle and is the leading authority on its medieval history.

The cost is £10 per person and bookings or enquiries should be directed to Peter Burton, bulletin@castlestudiesgroup.org.net . Cheques payable to CSG please.

Hornby Castle.

Landscape view of the present castle.

Photo. Erik Matthews



Introduction to Hornby Castle

The present Hornby Castle comprises the truncated remains of a medium sized courtyard castle conventionally dated by a reference in Leland's Itinerary to the very end of the 15th Century and the work of William 1st Baron Conyers. Building recording and documentary research in conjunction with building work undertaken in 2006/7 and the recent discovery of a brick vaulted service tunnel has however indicated that it dates to the period of ownership of Sir John Conyers KG in the mid 15th Century between the late 1440s and the early 1480s.

Since 2010 the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland has been engaged in a programme of archaeological fieldwork within the grounds involving excavation, field walking and documentary research into a detached moated structure which in part pre-dates the main castle building. The aim of the study day will be to give an initial look at the results of this work and the earlier recording work at the main castle to show the development of the moat from Late Saxon Noble Residence through an Anglo Norman Hunting Lodge to a "pleasaunce" intended for the entertainment of the guests of the 14th and 15th Century owners of the main castle. During the morning session the project co-ordinator will give two talks with a short break with the first outlining the results of the fieldwork so far and the second setting it into a wider context looking at the associated designed landscape

along with relationships with Middleham Castle where the owners at various times were influential along with other wider parallels. This will be followed after lunch with a visit to the site of the moat along with a tour of the surviving exterior of the

Hornby Castle.

Excavation of the hall in progress.

Photo. Erik Matthews



Castle and the mid 15th Century service tunnel finishing with a visit to the Church and the surviving earthworks of the Medieval designed landscape.

The excavation has uncovered evidence of a substantial complex comprising a first floor hall with service rooms beneath including a buttery, pantry and a laundry aligned north south with a series of chambers

robbed for their stone in the 18th Century to the south. The well preserved remains of a kitchen and a chamber aligned east/west along the moat bank lies to the north east. The complex was constructed in the early 14th Century for Sir John Neville a

Hornby Castle.

15th Century service tunnel exposed.

Photo. Erik Matthews

household knight for King Edward III and was subsequently used by the Conyers owners during the 15th Century before being attacked and collapsing during a military action towards the end of the Wars of the Roses. The site was previously occupied by a documented hunting lodge of the Dukes of Brittany during the 12th Century evidenced by a deposit of high status imported pottery from Northern France with a small quantity of imported pottery from Northern Germany dating to the Pre-Conquest period. The area was



overgrown and abandoned during the 16th Century before being used as a formal garden and venue for outdoor entertainment in the early 17th Century.

Itinerary

10.00 Refreshments and Registration, Greyhound Inn, Hackforth.

10.30 Welcome and Introductions, Hackforth Village Hall.

10.40 “*From Thegn to Garter Knight*” The Development of Hornby Castle from the 11th to the 15th Century. Erik Matthews.

11.20 Break.

11.30 “*Elite Contexts*” The Medieval Designed Landscape of Hornby and its Associations. Erik Matthews.

12.10 Discussion.

12.30 Lunch

13.30 Assemble Castle Car Park for Site Tour.

15.00 Visit St Mary’s Church and Earthworks of Designed Landscape.

16.00 Disperse.

NEWS EUROPE/WORLD

Ancient Roman coins unearthed from castle ruins in Okinawa

The recent discovery of Roman coins in controlled excavations of a castle in Japan prompted the inevitable question: how did they get there? Could Rome's fabled trading links have stretched as far as Okinawa?

Katsuren Castle in Okinawa Prefecture is said to have been occupied between the 12th to 15th centuries so the coins cannot represent commercial links between the castle's contemporaries and the Roman empire, which had fallen centuries before. Other finds from the castle indicate trade links with China - so perhaps the coins arrived there as curios, indirectly through trade with China or South-East Asia.

So far the only published images of the finds show the obverse of the four Roman coins and of an Ottoman era copper mangir coin with a clear Hijra date 1099,

which corresponds to 1687-88 in the western calendar. Like the Roman coins, the Ottoman coin poses problems, because it was issued after the presumed abandonment of the castle in the 15th century.

The Roman coins are not so easy to identify from the obverses alone. The coin that features most frequently in the news reports appears to be a copper alloy coin of Constantius II (337-361AD), the son of Constantine the Great.

However, it is important to note that coins like the one of Constantius II remained in circulation long after they were issued. In the eastern Roman empire, there is evidence that such coins may have continued in use up to the 6th century, some two centuries after they were made.

In the end, more detailed study of the other finds from the archaeological contexts in which these coins were found will be necessary to understand how they ended up on the site of a medieval Japanese castle.

Perhaps the coins are connected in some way to the influence of European traders in Japan in the 16th and 17th centuries - although the Ottoman coin dates to a period after European trade was restricted in Japan. However they arrived there, these coins appear to constitute the furthest-travelled Roman coins before the age of collectors and mass transport.

The Katsuren Castle Ruins sit on a steep hill close to the coast and offer attractive views over the landscape below. Just a few stone walls and foundations remain of the former castle. The site is included as one of the UNESCO World Heritage designated Castles of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

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Visitors Can Now Climb Denmark's Kalø Castle for the First Time in Centuries

A seemingly simple staircase design by MAP architects has opened up one of Denmark's most important archaeological gems, 'Kalø Castle', a 700 year-old medieval ruin. Previously inaccessible, visitors can now enjoy a whole new user experience thanks to the firm's innovative project.

Built on an isthmus projecting from the coast, it is a local landmark, a social anchor and major national tourist attraction in the northern part of the Jutland peninsula. However, the brick tower's internal structure had laid empty for centuries, with only a small single opening being the only source of visual access.



Katsuren castle in Uruma, Okinawa, southwestern Japan. Excavations in progress.

© EPA/Uruma City Education Board.

Kalø Castle, Denmark. The castle was founded in 1313 by the Danish king Erik Menved (Erik VI). It was one of at least four similar strongholds in Jutland, constructed to counter the ongoing rebellions of the Jutlandic nobility and peasantry against the Crown.

© Sebastian Nils

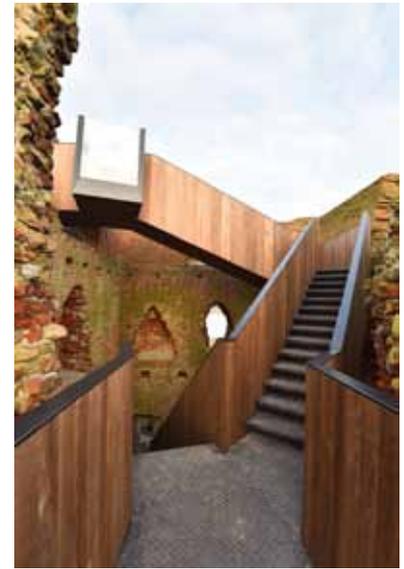
Kalø Castle, Denmark.
Interior of tower
showing new access
staircase.

© David A. Garcia

Now, a staircase zig-zags its way through the three-storey building, allowing visitors to enter and experience the archaeological layers at hand's reach and enjoy breathtaking views of the magnificent landscape via a series of openings and balconies.

To minimise damage to the monument the staircase is supported by the ruin at just four key points, spiralling up to the top where visitors are rewarded with sweeping views across the coastline. To protect the structure from harsh weather conditions, it's been clad in ash that has been heat-treated to last up to 60 years without the need for paint, while the handrail has been coated in a robust matte black finish.

What may seem like a simple staircase has transformed such an important Danish landmark, with visitor numbers already doubling overnight. It's a good example of impactful design, sensitively done, to help maintain and celebrate historic buildings in a 21st-century landscape.



.....

Previously unknown castle discovered in Bulgaria

Two unknown fortress walls and three unknown fortress towers as well as a 14th century Byzantine gold coin have been discovered by archaeologists during the 2016 excavations of the major medieval fortress of Rusocastro in today's Southeast Bulgaria.

The Rusocastro Fortress is best known for the Battle of Rusocastro in 1332 AD. It was the last big military victory of the medieval Bulgarian Empire before it was conquered by the invading Ottoman Turks at the end of the 14th century.

Rusocastro Fortress, Bulgaria. The tower previously excavated is shown here.

© e-burgas



It was also the last major battle of the seven-century-long Bulgarian-Byzantine Wars for domination of the Balkan Peninsula (lasting from the 7th until the 14th century), which ended when, weakened by their hostilities against one another, among other factors, Bulgaria and Byzantium were both conquered by the Ottoman Turkish invaders at the end of the 14th and the beginning of

the 15th century.

The Rusocastro Fortress, whose ruins stand near the modern-day town of Rusocastro, Kameno Municipality, near Bulgaria's Black Sea coast, were excavated for a total of three months in the late summer and early autumn of 2016 by a team from the Burgas Regional Museum of History led by its Director Milen Nikolov and Doroteya Gyurdzhiyska.

As early as August 2016, the archaeologists announced the discovery of a fully preserved 14th-century cobblestone road. Since then, however, the team has discovered two unknown fortress walls which were part of the Rusocastro Fortifications in different time periods.

The first newly found fortress wall is from the end of the 12th - beginning of the 13th century, the time of the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1396/1422), and was found between fortress towers flanking the main gate of the city. It is 3.45 meters wide, and made of stone and mortar. A previously unknown fortress tower has also been discovered there.

Rusocastro Fortress, Bulgaria. Aerial view of the excavations in progress.

© Kameno Municipality /Burgas Regional Museum of History



The second newly found fortress wall dates back to the 6th century AD, the Early Byzantine period, and is made of large stone blocks. This is where two rectangular fortress towers from the same period have also been found.

Rusocastro Fortress, Bulgaria. The newly discovered 14th century Byzantine gold coin.

© Kameno Municipality /Burgas Regional Museum of History

Up until the discovery of the three fortress towers, the archaeologists had known of just one other tower in the Rusocastro fortifications. In addition to the newly discovered structures, the archaeologists have also exposed a new 50-metre section of the main medieval outer wall of the Fortress.



The most impressive artefact found in the 2016 excavations there are a 14th century gold coin of Byzantine Emperor Andronicus III Palaeologus (r. 1328-1341), and a coin of Bulgarian Tsar Todor (Theodore) Svetoslav Terter (r. 1300-1322).

A total of 40 metres of the medieval cobblestone road have been exposed so far, with traces of the tracks of medieval ox carts still visible in some spots.

The newly discovered archaeological structures in Rusocastro have been conserved after the end of the digs by the research team who is now working on a project for their restoration and exhibition in situ. The 2016 excavations were funded by Kameno Municipality and Bulgaria’s Ministry of Culture.

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Bodrum Castle on UNESCO World Heritage Tentative list

Bodrum Castle, the symbol of the popular tourist town of Bodrum in Turkey’s western province of Muğla, is one of the 10 new places proposed to the World Heritage Tentative list, aiming to enter UNESCO’s World Heritage list.

Muğla Culture and Tourism Director Veli Çelik said the castle is “the symbol of the town” and today serves as the Underwater Archaeology Museum which is particularly popular with visitors.

Bodrum Castle, Turkey.

photo: Steve Ross



The castle opened as a museum in 1964 and its Underwater Archaeology Museum was opened in 1984. Around 35-40 percent of Bodrum’s visitors come to see Bodrum Castle. Recent survey, restoration and restitution works have been carried out at the castle by the Culture and Tourism Ministry since 2014, and works will continue throughout 2017.

“When the works are finished, Bodrum Castle will gain international legitimacy if it is included in the permanent list of UNESCO. Then we will be able to use international funds for the protection of this cultural heritage,” Çelik said.

Bodrum Castle was built by the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem principally in the 15th century although on a much earlier foundation and preserves its original plan and character of the period. Since the Order was a multinational organization with members from several countries of Europe, each member had its own tower, each in its own style.

The Castle consists of the French, Spanish (Snake), German, Italian and English Towers. The knights had placed hundreds of painted coats of arms and carved reliefs on the walls above the gates. Two hundred and forty-nine separate designs still remain,

Bodrum Castle, Turkey.
Arms carved onto the
English Tower.

including those of grand masters, castle commandants, countries, and personal coat of arms of knights and religious figures. Among those the most noticeable one is the coat of arms of King Henry IV of England on the English Tower.



The key aspects of the castle that constitute its submission for UNESCO status are:

- The Castle reflects virtually all features of monumental art, architecture and technique of Europe in the 15th century which is rare in Anatolia. In this regard the Castle is an outstanding extension of medieval Europe of the time.
- The Castle testifies to the history and culture of The Order of The St. John of Jerusalem. Soon after its construction in the 15th century, the Castle became the Knights' most important position outside Rhodes which commands the usual route followed by all shipping of that day.
- Bodrum Castle preserves its original plan and character of Knights' period and represents Gothic architectural features. It also contains cultural assets from the 4th century B.C. to Ottoman period.

.....

Welsh Myths

A myth in Wales that gets mentioned frequently, and often in history books emanating from publishers in the Cotswold area, is that Wales has more castles than any other country. Usually such a statement is not accompanied as to how the figure has been calculated, such as in proportion to the size of country etc, so we are usually left with the bald statement, echoed recently in the first newsletter of the Welsh Battlefields Society.



So anyone reading for the first time the *unqualified* statement that Wales has more castles than any other country (David Cathcart King calculated around 450 existing and vanished sites) would assume that, for example, England has fewer. This is clearly not the case, as northern England, together with Shropshire, can muster around 585 castles for a start, again based on DJCK's 1983 calculations.

I would make a plea that statements such this 'myth' needs to be qualified when used, otherwise misinformation gets firmly fixed as the truth in popular imagination.

John R. Kenyon

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Mystery castle painting

CSG has received a request to try and identify the castle depicted in the (cropped) painting shown at the bottom of page 23, on the last page of the *Bulletin*. It is by Peter DeWint entitled *Castle above a River, Woodcutters in the Foreground*, and was painted in c.1820. It is probably a site in England or Wales on the basis of DeWint's other landscape works of this nature.

Any suggestions about which castle this might be are welcome. Please send to the *Bulletin* editor bulletin@castlestudiesgroup.org.uk who will pass on to the enquirer.

Opinion piece - Heritage Tourism

CADW have recently released a press release entitled 'Harlech Castle investment a triumph for tourism' see page 2 of this edition of the *Bulletin*.

They claim their £6m refurb of Harlech, with the new bridge and visitor centre has resulted in a 35% rise in visitors, a 69% rise in income and a 439% rise in shop sales.

I'm not doubting these figures but how much these increases are due to the refurbishment and how much are due to the devaluing of the pound making the UK a much more attractive place for foreign tourists to visit must be given consideration.

The boost in overseas visitors and, perhaps, a modest increase in 'staycation' holiday choices by UK residents are going to increase visitor numbers to heritage sites and this will be particular welcome for English Heritage in its second year as a charity.

Conisborough Castle,
Yorkshire.

Visitor centre c.1980s
(left) and current
centre (right).

photos: Philip Davis



However it is important that the heritage bodies do realise the real reasons for number increases. Of course new facilities are needed at a number of sites and maintenance of existing facilities must not be overlooked. Staff deserve to work in reasonable degrees of comfort and visitors should have what they need to make their visit enjoyable and educational. I have no objection to such facilities, if they are appropriate to the setting (I particularly enjoy the visitor facilities at Richmond Castle). If the heritage bodies begin to believe the solution to their difficulties is in large scale investment in engineering wonders, like Harlech's floating bridge or prominently located visitor centres, like that proposed at York, and they use an increase in visitor numbers to justify such investment then they may well be left in a disastrous position if the basic economics change, the pound rises in value and visitor numbers fall.

A lesson should be drawn from Conisborough Castle in Yorkshire. A large investment in the 1980s did some good in re-flooring and re-roofing the great tower in a way which has worked well, but the interesting and original lauded visitor centre soon drew marked criticism, aged badly and has now, at some expense, been removed and replaced by a modest extension to a 19th century house. The anticipated increase in visitor numbers from this 1980s development were never realised and, arguably, always overstated.

A particular *bete noir* for me is the use of crude customer surveys to formulate policy and marketing ideas. It is extremely difficult to actually gain a real understanding of what people want from market survey's. Doing effective market research is expensive, time consuming and requires very skilled psychologists. Crude tick box forms really only ever tell you what people think you want them to say - not what they really feel or actually want. It is relatively easy for a manager to spend a few tens of thousands on commissioning a survey and then using that to justify a policy initiative - if things go wrong it was the survey's fault, not the managers. The lessons of 'New Coke' from the 1980s and more recent political opinion polls do not seem to have been learned.

I want to preserve and enjoy the country's heritage. I want it to be enjoyed by others. I want the heritage bodies to succeed in the work and their mission. I believe the people working in the UK's various heritage bodies also want these things and have a genuine love for their countries heritage. But those people need to be aware of economic realities and must be careful not to delude themselves into thinking 'prestigious' developments are the best solution in all cases. Such development will sometimes be worthwhile but it is not a panacea curing all ills. Other, less glamorous and less costly approaches to the issue of visitor facilities should always be considered.

Philip Davis

NEWS SCOTLAND

Lost medieval castle discovered in Angus

The remains of a lost medieval castle have been unearthed in the grounds of a country mansion. Excavations in the grounds of the House of Dun, near Montrose, Angus, have revealed the location of the buildings which were erected by a Scottish nobleman in the 14th century.

Excavations of the House of Dun in Angus.

© National Trust for Scotland



The barony of Dun was bought by Sir Robert Erskine, of Erskine in Renfrewshire, around 1375. He commissioned the castle, along with a chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Recent repair work to the Erskine Family Mausoleum on the estate revealed the foundations of the chapel and now an excavation led by National Trust for Scotland Archaeologist Dr Daniel Rhodes has pinpointed the location of the castle.

The excavations were carried out as part of the conservation charity's Trailblazer residential working holidays, which offer the opportunity for young people aged 16 to 17 to experience archaeological excavations and conservation work.

The castle was likely to be in the form of a Tower House surrounded by a curtain wall and ancillary buildings, and the site has been noted on maps of the area since 1865 but it wasn't until conservation work

on the mausoleum and archaeological investigation began in 2013 that the extent of the remains were really known.

Detailed analyses of the Mausoleum showed that the building originally formed part of a chapel from the late 1300s and that the chapel was believed to stand to the west of the original Dun Castle.

Following a geophysical survey of the site the excavation has established the location of this lost medieval castle and it's hoped that further work will help to reveal more of the site.

Dr Daniel Rhodes, National Trust for Scotland's Area Archaeologist said: 'This discovery of the site of the Castle of Dun is one more piece in the jigsaw that is the House of Dun Estate.'

'We're constantly learning more about this fascinating place and with the dedicated help of the young Trailblazer participants we're able to reveal more of Scotland's history while inspiring young adults to develop an interest in history and archaeology.'

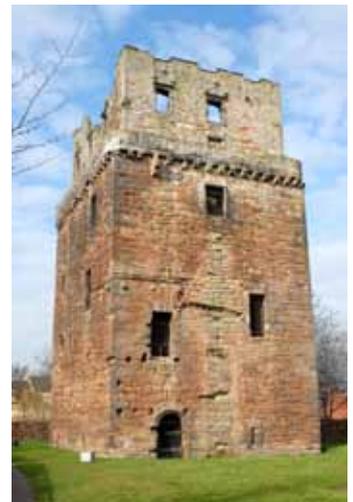


The historic House of Dun in whose grounds the medieval castle has been discovered.

Charles McKean Memorial Prize 2016

The Scottish Castles Association has recently announced the award of the Charles McKean Memorial Prize for Architecture 2016. This new prize is for the best architecture student design for the reoccupation and extension of a ruinous tower house or castle. The late President of the Scottish Castles Association 2011-2013, Professor Charles McKean, was keenly interested in modern uses for old buildings and of castles in particular. Entries, which were all of a high standard, designed re-use and extensions for Gilbertfield Tower (Lanark), Newark Castle (Fife) and Preston Tower (Prestonpans).

The judges unanimously agreed that the entry of Richard Thomson, Lucy Allen and Jon Allcock from the University of Edinburgh should be the winner. They designed a scheme to



Preston Tower, Prestonpans, East Lothian.

SCA prizewinners at award ceremony. L-R: RIAS President Willie Watt, Lord Steel of Aikwood, Lucy Allen, Margaret McKean, Richard Thomson, SCA President Prof. Richard Oram. photo: Scottish Castles Association



revitalise the ruined Preston Tower in Prestonpans, pictured left, by proposing a new craft glass workshop within the walled garden, with an attached café and exhibition spaces. In addition, concerned about the disconnect between the town and the tower, the students created an interactive trail through the town’s industrial and cultural heritage, using the popular treasure-hunting phone app ‘Geocaching’.

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CONFERENCE REPORT

On Saturday 18th February 2017 the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society held a day school of talks on the theme of ‘Life in the Medieval castles of west Wales in peace and war’. A hundred or so people attended the conference, held at the Carmarthen Campus of the University of Trinity St David’s.

Starting the talks was Dr Chris Caple, discussing the sieges of Dryslwyn and Nevern Castles. Although both of these sieges were quite long in terms of contemporary sieges in medieval warfare they were, in terms of the life of these castles, transient affairs so it was interesting that at Dryslwyn so much archaeological evidence of the historically recorded sieges was found. This evidence included, but was not limited to, three 50kg rounded limestone balls found in close association with a portion of rebuilt walling!

Following on, Professor Ralph Griffiths outlined the complex relationships of the various Carmarthen Castle owners and constables with the forces of the Glyndŵr revolt and the War of the Roses. His political analysis emphasised castles as centres of political administration rather than military bases although, for this writer, his view that saw castles as being in a state of decline in the 15th century was somewhat out of kilter with current castle studies thinking.

Dr Chris Caple presenting his paper at the recent Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society conference in February 2017.

After a fine lunch of cowl and crumble, Prof David Austin’s talk on Carew Castle was mainly concerned with its role as a centre-piece of early Tudor theatrical status display showing how much the scope of castle studies has extended in recent years going well beyond the castle gate and deep into the castle landscape.



Finally, Chris Jones-Jenkins’ beautifully illustrated talk on the experience of ‘reconstructing’ castles and their interiors showed some of the obstacles in gaining popular acceptance of modern reconstructions due to many commissioners for his work requiring drawings which fit their understanding of what the public can comprehend. This may be exemplified by, as Chris says, the castle great hall always being illustrated as the site of a ‘party’ with wealthy people sat eating. When will we see a great hall illustrated as the site of a legal court case I wonder?

Unfortunately, Will Davies of CADW, who members will remember for his fine onsite talks at the recent CSG conferences at Wrexham and Hereford, was unable to attend and give his intended paper.

The talks were scheduled to last 45 minutes which is sufficient time for most speakers to explain their points and a welcome length over the 30 minute slots that some conferences impose on their speakers. Unfortunately, due to the cancellation of one of the planned speakers, the remaining talks were extended to one hour on the day which I found made them lose something of their impetus. The extra time I felt could have been better used by extending the Q and A discussion and direct involvement from attendees.

In summary an excellent conference topic, in a very fine venue, with excellent speakers, slightly marred by a rushed choice on how best to deal with an unforeseen development. One can hardly criticise the organisers for this, and which of us would do better?. I do hope other organisers faced with a similar crisis can learn from this critique.

Philip Davis

Cáceres, Spain. New light on Islamic Castle

The fortified medieval city of Cáceres in mid-western Spain has a large concentration of medieval and renaissance buildings. The importance of the assemblage has merited UNESCO listing since 1986. The most significant historical period that produced much the layout of the city as we see it today was the Islamic period from the 8th-13th centuries. Cáceres was a vibrant and wealthy city within Islamic Spain until its conquest in 1229, when the city was taken by the Christian King of Leon, Alphonso IX.

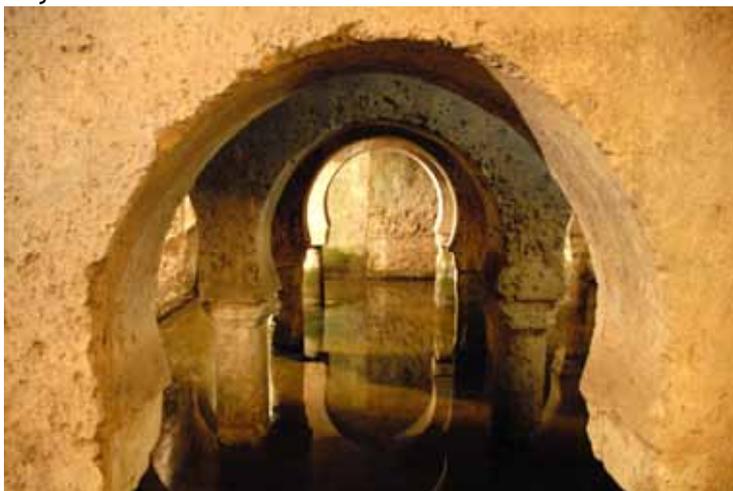
Cáceres, Extremadura, Spain. View showing medieval town wall and mural towers.



Over 30 Islamic period towers still remain as does much of the Islamic circuit of town walls and mural towers. The Islamic castle itself, which formed the core of the city, was dismantled and the land reordered during the 15th century. From the 13th and 14th century the Christian noblemen who were granted plots of land within the walls built for themselves fortified dwellings and towers and many of these remain. The redevelopment of the city continued into the Renaissance period when huge sums of money from the New World, principally South America, poured into this area of Spain and many fine palaces were built with it. The town therefore possesses a remarkable collection of historic architecture covering a wide period of history.

It is somewhat surprising to discover that so little modern scientific archaeological and historical research has been undertaken on these monuments. A case to make the point concerns the superb Islamic period, 11th/12th century water cistern that occupies the innermost part of the city. This large subterranean vaulted and aisled chamber was water filled from the late 15th century and has supplied the town of Cáceres with water until relatively recent times. It still contains water to this day.

Cáceres, Extremadura, Spain. Underground water cistern of Islamic construction within the castle.



The location of the water cistern, at the high point of the Islamic castle, was in the typical position of such features, allowing gravity to aid the distribution of the stored water, and so it has always been assumed to have been an original part of the Muslim fortification. No one it seems, has questioned why such elaborate columns, aisles and vaults would be required for a water storage cistern and even the UNESCO listing

continues this line.

However, recent scientific investigation of the cistern by the Spanish archaeological consultancy Arqueocheck, has revealed a very different origin. Using ground penetrating radar, detailed physical examination of the remains and scientific analysis of samples taken from the fabric, some very interesting results have emerged.

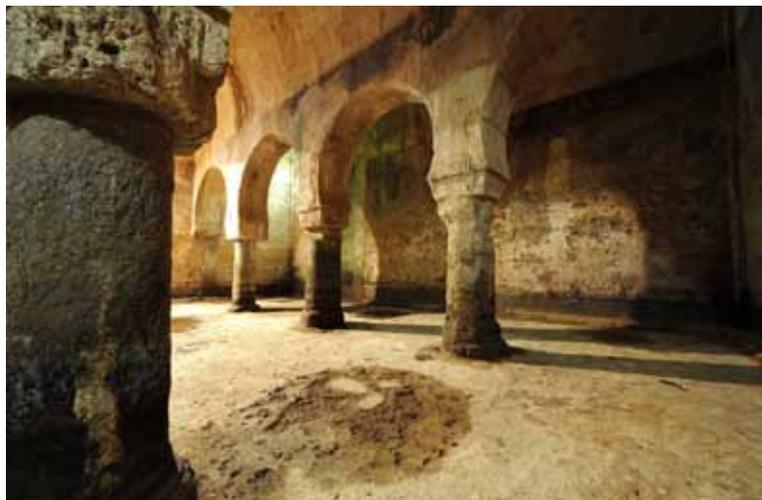
The spandrels and soffits of the arches were plastered with normal lime

plaster and painted with red and white pigments that were water soluble. Islamic water cisterns were usually plastered with a different composition of a more practical waterproof material. Also it has been established that the water cistern structure itself is not sunk into the topography of the site in the form of an excavated cavity as has always been thought, but is actually built on top of the ground level with man-made layers of a sub structure discovered beneath the floor. The orientation of the structure too is SE-NW which is the usual direction of Mosques in this part of al-Andalus.

It is now considered by the archaeological team that this water cistern within the castle was originally built as a mosque, possibly in the 11th century. In the second half of the 12th century, for reasons that are not yet understood, the mosque was taken

Cáceres, Extremadura, Spain. Cistern within former castle, with water removed, revealing medieval mosque architecture.

© Victor Gibello



out of use and waterproof joints and mortar introduced to replace the original material. The original roof of the mosque, possibly of timber, was replaced with stone vaulting in order to enclose the whole structure, completing its transformation for water storage.

It then seems that after a period of time being used for water storage during the medieval period the structure fell from use

completely and lay abandoned under new buildings that were constructed on top of the cistern until some time in the 15th century when the cistern was restored and put back into use. At this point the tell-tale prayer-niche or mihrab, which all mosques possess, was removed and a new wall was inserted in its place.

The investigation, which revealed the fascinating origins of this structure were actually completed some time ago, but the results have still not been published nor has this new interpretation been absorbed into the presentation of the site. Financial restrictions and budget cuts within the heritage sector in Spain have left the proposed new interpretation centre and museum in Cáceres on hold. This case also highlights the potential for new discoveries that detailed investigation can reveal. If such major changes in interpretation are possible within world heritage sites such as at Cáceres who knows what there is to learn from the lesser known sites within Spain.

Peter A. Burton

Mystery Castle.

See page 18 for details if you think you can identify this castle.

