

Teacher for Geography/History would put on an activities day for children at St. Ives School to demonstrate how Early Technology activities could deliver National Curriculum requirements. It was encouraging to see with what enthusiasm the children and teachers tackled, among other things, soil paintings, plaiting leaves and grasses and moving an enormous piece of granite from one side of St. Ives School to another. They now have a brand new monolith! (Actually, being slightly smaller than monoliths are normally reckoned to be, they refer to it as a 'minilith!')

All of these events took place as scheduled and were very useful and very successful as background to the project. A mainstay of the project was Brian Johnson, Advisory Teacher of Technology. In fact, the more Brian became involved in the project, the more we felt he was in danger of remaining in the Romano-British period for ever! Over to Brian for an account of some of his work:

'My first involvement with the Early Technology Project was at a planning meeting, at County Hall, in the summer of 1992. A lot of ideas were discussed, but the one which appealed to me was that of re-roofing one of the dwellings at Chysauster.

After discussing our hopes for Chysauster I decided to start organising the collection of materials needed.

### Cutting reeds for the roof

A visit to the Wood's settlement, in February, gave me my first real idea of what I had let myself in for. By this time, I had made contact with Dave Flumm, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds warden at Marasion marsh, and had been given permission to cut reed for the thatch. The bad news was that the cutting had to be completed before the birds started to nest, estimated to be no more than a month away.

Arrangements were made for as many helpers as possible, from the schools involved in the project, to cut the reed during the last weekend of the half term holiday, in two weeks time.

Over the weekend we cleared about two acres of the marsh, under the guidance of Dave Flumm. The pile of reed looked mountainous, and it was good to know that our effort would benefit the marsh as part of the management programme, promoting regrowth.

It was not until we began sorting and tying the reed into bundles for transporting that we realised that we had a problem. The area we had cleared has not been cut for some time so that much of our pile was old and broken reed, too short or rotten to be of use, only about a quarter of the reed would be good enough for

thatching.

We had planned to re-roof the larger oval enclosure in the house six complex at Chysauster, that was about 9m x 7m, but we would not have enough reed, so we decided to tackle the more modest round house just under 6m in diameter.

### Constructing the roof

Timber was donated by the South West Electricity Board, who regularly coppice to keep their power lines clear. Their contractor, Nick Berryman, selected, cut and delivered to site the poles and withies needed, and work was begun on the frame for the roof at the end of May. Once again the heads, teachers and parents from the primary schools gave up countless hours during weekends and the half term holiday, and with help and advice from John and Jacqui Wood, with their children Imogen and Dominic, a roof began to transform the skyline at Chysauster.

Pupils of the primary schools sorted and tied bundles of reed into mats in order to speed the thatching, but it soon became obvious that we did not have enough reed to make a waterproof roof.

Thatching started as soon as the timber frame was complete, and our second concession to the twentieth century was employed. The first was the use of sizer bailer twine to lash the timbers and reed bundles. A bosun's chair was rigged, using pulleys, from

the apex of the roof. The pulleys enabled me to haul my ample self upward so that I could swing out and hook onto the framework. Here I was able to work with someone on the outside, using a rustic pole and bailer twine ladder, sewing the reed mats in place.'

Suddenly it was 21 June and children arrived from the four Primary Schools to the camp which had been erected by parents, teachers and pupils during the previous weekend. The site was very kindly loaned to us by Roger Matthews, a local farmer and a governor of Gulval Primary School. Children, in wonderful costumes, worked with Jilly Hellerman, a drama specialist, to perfect a chant and ritual for passing through the 'Time Tunnel' in the magic blackthorn hedge. Having done so, they began work around the hut. The changeover from primary to secondary on Wednesday afternoon went almost unnoticed and the slightly older pupils were soon just as engrossed in the activities as the primaries had been.

Despite our wish for authenticity, we had to use the modern equivalent of tools. Thus it was permissible to use knives, chisels, and so on and we made considerable use of natural string and twine. We had to cheat a bit, of course. We were only on site for a week, after all! The only thing which worried me before we began was the possibility of children having tried everything by lunchtime and

becoming disinterested! What would I do?

### Activities on site

John Wood had set up a pole lathe and a workbench for spokeshaving. Children made rakes, hoes, brooms etc. which they used on-site.

Jacqui organised morning groups of children to collect hawthorn flowers, penny wort and various leaves and herbs for the wild salad lunch. Groups of children helped Jacqui to prepare the lunches which consisted of lamb stew or fish, wild salads, (complete with salad dressings, traded with the



Cooking over an open fire.

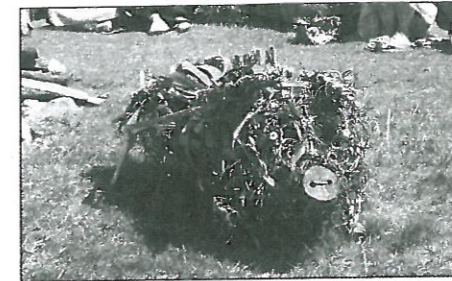
Romans) various types of oat and wheat cakes, biscuits which were cooked over the open fire in the hut and elderflower cordial. Not all was made on site; the elderflower cordial, for example, was made by Jacqui earlier and brought along. The children had made cups and bowls of clay back in school.

John and Jacqui's daughter Imogen worked with many of the children on plaiting, weaving, cooking and lots of other activities. Imogen already wants to be an archaeologist. Pity! She'd make an excellent teacher!

Two groups a day visited the neighbouring farm to milk the goats. The milk was used to make butter, cheese and cream. Brian Johnson was 'Brian the Smith' with bellows and a charcoal fire. He demonstrated simple forging techniques, using a granite anvil and crude hammer. The same fire was used to melt pewter and cast simple jewellery based on Celtic patterns. Pupils made brooch pins, pendants and coins by pressing and scratching their designs into the surface of the soft cuttlefish bones which were used as moulds. Brian also doubled as 'Brian the Thatcher' working with a small group to make the cap to finish the hut.

A fish smoker visited and demonstrated the smoking of mackerel and herring, which was utilised in the lunch. He left us fish to smoke over the fire in the hut but somehow, I don't think we quite got that right!

Peter Pearman, a fisherman whose hobby was flint knapping, spent a long time with the children making knives, hide scrapers, and various implements. He also demonstrated the making of arrowheads and made a flint saw which proved to be highly efficient.



Rasher the pig.

Carole Page, a local artist, taught the children how to make pigments from various plants and vegetables. They worked on hessian sacking and made sizing for it before painting. They even made their own brushes by chewing the ends of willow twigs! As well as each group making a banner based on designs taken from the local environment, they also made a wonderful sculpture of a pig, subsequently christened 'Rasher'. The St Ives children also made a lifesized sculpture of a Roman soldier.

Storytelling, music and drama were an integral part of the week. Alison Dures, Advisory Teacher for Drama, and Jilly Hellerman, worked with the children on story and legend, Alison arriving one morning as a wise seer-woman. Keith Havercroft, Advisory Teacher for Music, spent a morning with groups of children devising and playing rhythms from locally found objects. On two evenings came Kelvin Jones, a teacher from a local secondary school. He was resplendent in cloak and costume and strode about the circle of our moot hut, telling stirring Celtic tales in the lights of a flickering campfire.

We had two querns, one a saddle quern, both kindly loaned by the Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro. The children soon found that a hollow stone in the hut circle, previously designated a post-hole, actually served as a third quern and possibly the best of the three. Much corn was ground by the children and small cakes and loaves cooked. Place mats from which to eat, baskets and hats were all plaited from yellow flag and similar broad leaves.

Some children collected sheep's wool and were able to make thread using drop spindles. John and Jacqui had brought a loom which they had made



and set up earlier and children were able to have a go at weaving.

### Evaluation

I needn't have worried! The atmosphere of the whole week was one of relaxation. Occasionally, one or two children were to be seen strolling around the site for a few minutes or sitting in the shade of the hut, resting. On the whole, however, they all worked like slaves, moving as they wished from one task to another. It seemed no sooner had we begun each day than it was six o'clock and time to go and milk the goats and eat our



Relaxing in the hut.

evening meal. I suppose the weather helped a little. My own personal worst moment was when I walked, staff in hand, down the path to talk to Jilly and Alison about what they were going to do next. Whilst I was peripherally aware of visitors being there, I was unprepared for a voice suddenly to say, with a marked New World accent, 'would you mind looking this way, please?' I turned to be faced with a half-circle of about twenty Canadians, each of whom had about three cameras. Jilly and Alison, being well into the dramatic bit, immediately fell into Romano-British role leaving me standing as stiffly as the local granite, desperately wishing they'd go away. Beware, all those of you who dress up in costumes but are full of inhibitions!

I don't really know how close we came to being Romano-British people in the short time we were at Chysauster but I know that the dozens of visitors who came whilst we were there were fascinated with what we were doing and many joined in. The children were totally involved with their various tasks and I am confident that they learned something about what it must have been like two thousand years ago. At the very least, just living, working and playing together in that way has enormous value in their development and, anyway, which of those children will ever forget the atmosphere as we all silently watched a brilliant red sun disappear behind the village on the longest day, as it did two thousand years ago? I certainly won't.

Roger Butts  
Advisory Teacher for Outdoor  
Education, Cornwall

Working at the spokeshave bench



Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Cornwall Archaeological Unit

Roger Butts

Roger Butts

RIGHT: Plaiting place mats for lunch.  
INSET LEFT: Flint knapping  
INSET RIGHT: Preparing food

# Clues from the Past



## Clues from the Past

Robin Place  
Wayland, 1993  
ISBN 0-7502-0677-2  
£9.50

This lively book manages to get to grips with most categories of archaeological evidence and describes many aspects of post-excavation work. Examples are drawn from prehistory through to the industrial revolution. The age-range is not stated, though it must stretch from about 10 to 100.

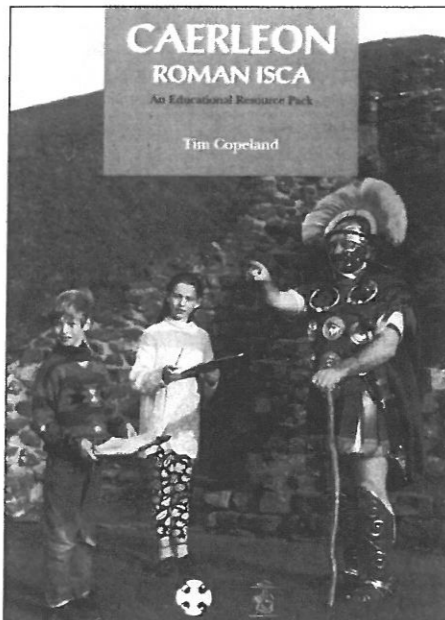
Presentation is excellent, the text is neither patronising nor does it oversimplify complicated processes. Robin Place describes the evidence, the 'clues', both in an archaeological context and in the laboratory, avoiding any excesses of 'scientism'. In the copious illustrations most of the people looking at screens or through microscopes are, refreshingly, not wearing white coats.

Unfortunately we do not move beyond the archaeologist-as-detective-as-pathologist. If the book fails it is in this area. The question 'what is archaeology?' is asked in the first few pages and yet no answer is provided that gives the archaeologist much of a role in the interpretation of evidence - apart from statements that we are finding out about 'everyday life' in past times. So what? This book is about evidence, analysis and conservation. Well yes, except: where are the books for children with any series archaeological interpretation in them? The book does nothing to dispel the incorrect view shared by most children, many teachers and even some archaeologists, that archaeologists examine the evidence - interpretation is a job for the historian.

'Clues from the Past' does succeed on a number of levels, and both adults and children will find much that is genuinely exciting. Some of the evidence presented achieves the poignancy which awakens our imagination about the past - the Roman tile which bears the words :

'Augustalis has been going off on his own every day this fortnight'. The project work, such as how to make a medieval floor tile or shoe, made me want to do it myself.

Phillipe Planel  
Ex-teacher; writer on archaeology and education



## Caerleon Roman Isca An Educational Resource Pack

Tim Copeland  
Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments  
National Museum of Wales, 1993  
ISBN 0-7200-0382-2  
£4.95

At last, something sensible for teachers on the Romans which does not reinforce the textbook attitude to the indigenous people of Britain and their foreign invaders!

Tim Copeland, who has written several books for teachers for English Heritage, has done an excellent job in writing a book (24 pages) and loose pages of teachers' notes and activity sheets (12 pages) for this important legionary fortress in south Wales. I particularly liked the design and layout with fact boxes on each double-page spread. One of these boxes gives the reader all the information on how to square-bash Roman style - with commands in Latin!

There are plenty of ideas for teachers with separate headings for preparation, on-site work and follow-up activities. The activity sheets are well thought-out, too.

If you are planning a visit to Caerleon, this pack is essential. If not, buy one anyway - you will find it an invaluable resource for studying Roman Military life at Key Stages 2 or 3.

Mike Corbishley  
Head of Education  
English Heritage



## International Directory Youth & Heritage

Jeunesse and Patrimoine International and UNESCO have recently published a directory of organisations concerned with the heritage and education in ninety two countries world wide. Each listing includes address, activities, publications and contact people. It will be invaluable for anyone wanting to make contact in other countries. For more information contact: Jeunesse & Patrimoine International  
9 avenue Franklin Roosevelt  
75008 Paris  
FRANCE

## Courses for Teachers at the V&A

The Education Department at the V&A Museum have a programme of INSET courses running through to the Spring Term 1994 for both primary and secondary teachers. A free booklet is available giving full details. Among forthcoming courses are these three covering the Victorians at Key Stage 2.

Teaching the Victorians at the V&A  
Tuesday 2 November 1993 10.15-16.00

Includes lectures on the Great Exhibition, the founding of the V&A, and Victorian furniture and dress as well as sessions on the collections and planning a visit. Fee £38 including lunch.

Studying the Victorians through drawing  
Friday 12 November 1993 10.15-16.00

This course will focus on Victorian buildings. Practical activities include making sketch books and methods for encouraging close observation through drawing. Fee £30.

Not the Guided Tour - an alternative approach to studying the Victorians  
Friday 3 December 1993 10.15-16.00

This will concentrate on ways of using the V&A's Victorian collections but avoid the guided tour and the worksheet and look instead at problem solving and debating issues. Fee £30.

For further information or to book a place on any of these courses please write to The Box Office, V&A, Cromwell Road, London SW7 2RL. Tel. 071-938 8407.



## Using the Historic Environment

This new free booklet is packed with practical ideas and activities for making use of the resource of the historic environment. It contains sections on:

- what is the historic environment?
- the conservation of the historic environment and how to get pupils involved in the issues it raises.
- four pages of National Curriculum ideas covering every subject and cross-curricular themes.
- ideas for preparation, on-site and follow-up work.
- resources

## Your Past, Our Future

In Remnants 20 we featured some of the winning entries from this unique competition organised by the Accademia Italiana and as promised we are pleased to announce details now of a nationwide competition for 1994, supported by the Halifax Building Society. **Your Past, Our Future** is an art, design and technology challenge for 5-18 year

olds to express their concern for the future of our artistic and architectural inheritance in poster or video form.

40 posters and 20 videos will be selected by the judges to be included in a nationwide tour which will open at the Accademia Italiana, London in May 1994 and tour to Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast throughout the summer months.

As a result of class discussion, pupils should design a poster or produce a short video which uses images and words to draw attention to what they consider worth preserving for future generations. This may be approached from a local, national or international angle. A slogan or message should be incorporated into the design of the poster.

The competition is open to all schools in the UK and will be judged in three age categories: Ages 5-11, 11-14 and 14-18. Generous prizes will be awarded in each category and will include school and video equipment, art materials supplied by Philip and Tacey, some cash prizes and a tour of Granada Television Studios, to see a programme in the making. All entries must reach the Accademia Italiana by 30 March 1994.

A free Teacher's Pack giving guidance on how to approach the competition has been specially produced in partnership with English Heritage. It suggests starting points to discuss current issues in conservation as well as exploring the themes of the competition and how they fit into the curriculum.

For further information on the

competition and a copy of the Teacher's Pack please contact:

Sarah Burles  
Education Officer  
Accademia Italiana  
24 Rutland Gate  
London  
SW7 4BB



## A Teacher's Guide to Using School Buildings

Sallie Purkis

We are pleased to announce the publication of this new book in our **Education on Site** series. Every year schools all over the country research the history of their school. This book will help teachers make the best use of the variety of sources, from documents to the buildings themselves. It contains case studies from schools that have completed their investigations and each section focuses on a particular line of enquiry. The book also shows how your own school can form the starting point for a wider project investigating the material culture of nineteenth and twentieth century Britain and will be a useful resource for relevant Study Units in the National Curriculum. The book costs £5.95 including postage and packing and can be ordered from English Heritage, PO Box 229, Northampton, NN6 9RY. Please quote product code XP 11510.

For a **free copy** of **Using the Historic Environment**, our latest **Resources** catalogue and the **Free Educational Visits** booklet just complete the slip below and return it to English Heritage Education Service, Keysign House, 429 Oxford Street, London, W1R 2HD.

Please send me a free copy of **Using the Historic Environment**  **Resources**   
**Free Educational Visits**  (Please tick as applicable)

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