

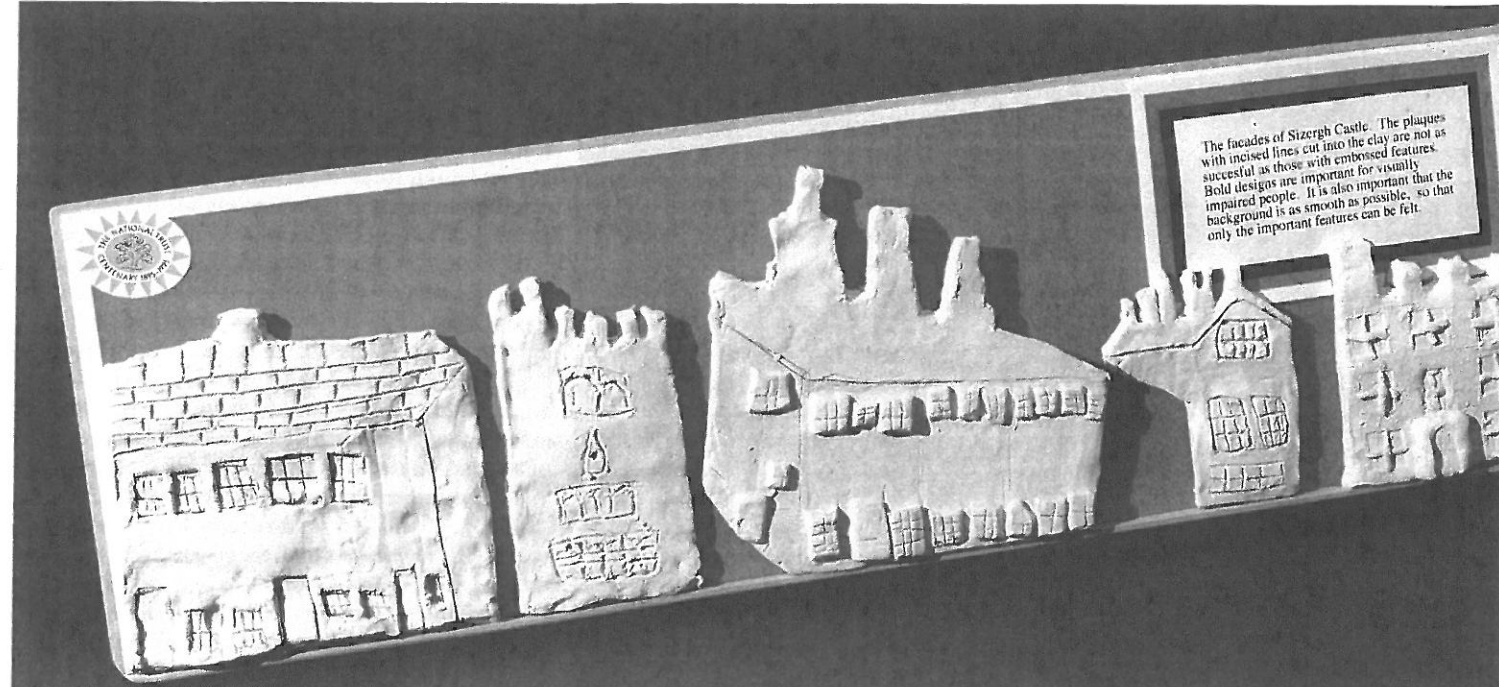


Borough Council Housing
Cambridge Borough Council was proud of its public housing record and put up a memorial plaque which reads: 'The 2,000th house built by the Borough of Cambridge 1919-1934' Pupils might:

- make a transcript of the plaque
- use a street directory from 1934 to find out

who lived in the house

- put out an appeal for anyone who lived in the street at that time, asking them what the houses were like inside
- discuss why it is important for councils to build houses to rent
- find out who is on the Housing Committee today, and ask them if any commemorative plaques have been put up recently



The facades of Sizergh Castle. The plaques with incised lines cut into the clay are not as successful as those with embossed features. Bold designs are important for visually impaired people. It is also important that the background is as smooth as possible, so that only the important features can be felt.

Making history tactile

English Heritage has recently supported an extended project run by the University of Lancaster's Department of Teaching and Education Studies, to involve pupils in creating resources that will help children with visual impairments appreciate historic sites

Ambleside Roman fort lies in a field on the edge of Lake Windermere. It is not very spectacular and there is no information for visitors. Two teacher-training students at the university, challenged to provide an interpretation of the site for the public, chose to consider the needs of the visually impaired and, among other things, created a tactile plan of the fort, labelled in braille. The materials they used were all inexpensive offcuts – pieces of velcro, sandpaper, string and fabrics. The success of their design, when tested by a visually impaired adult, was the launching pad for a much more ambitious project involving Cumbria schools.

Special provision for the visually impaired at historic sites normally falls into three categories that can be tackled by children at school. The first resource, the creation of a large printed guide for the use of the partially-sighted, enhances language work and provides an opportunity to develop Information Technology skills. The second resource, an audio tape guiding the visually impaired visitor around the site, effectively promotes spoken English. The third resource involves the construction of tactile models, plaques and plans, and incorporates elements of art, technology and mathematics.

Underlying the work is the history of the sites, chosen because of their connection with the study units of the Key Stage 2 history curriculum. In order to create their support material, the children need to know the history of the site and to observe and understand the important features associated with it. With English Heritage's support it was possible to set up three projects using different historic sites. The first project was organised by Anne Mossop, history coordinator at Long Marton Primary School, Cumbria. Her class of seven to 11 year olds was studying The Tudors study unit, which provided the context for visiting Sizergh Castle, a National Trust property near

Kendal. The second project involved primary education students from Lancaster University working with junior classes at Barrow Island Primary School (history coordinator, Audrey McKinnon) and North Walney Primary School (history coordinator, Adrienne Griffiths), both in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. On this occasion English Heritage's Furness Abbey – founded in the 12th century and dissolved on Henry VIII's orders – was used. The ruins provided a very different challenge to that of Sizergh Castle.

The third project was based at Frizington Primary School, Cumbria (headteacher and history coordinator, Margaret Wiltshire) and used the parish church. It is a small, unpretentious Victorian building, and the study formed part of the work of Year 5 and Year 6 children. The sites were all very different and each project developed its own focus and momentum.

With a clear brief, and known outcome, the new fifth Key Element, 'Organisation and Communication' had a high profile.

Long Marton School and Sizergh Castle

This school was asked to participate in the project as part of a cross curricular topic currently under way with the juniors at the school. We studied and researched the Tudor background, investigating the furniture and decor as well as the political and royal aspects of the period. We also studied portraits, contrasting them with those from the Stuart period; this stretched the children's vocabulary, stimulated their narrative and helped them use adjectives effectively in their detailed descriptions at the chosen site. In addition to the historical research we also learned a lot about visual impairment and the various aids available.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind resources pack was invaluable: we used the video, *Anna's Story* as

Clay facades of Sizergh castle made with grey clay which reproduces well the limestone finish particular to the castle

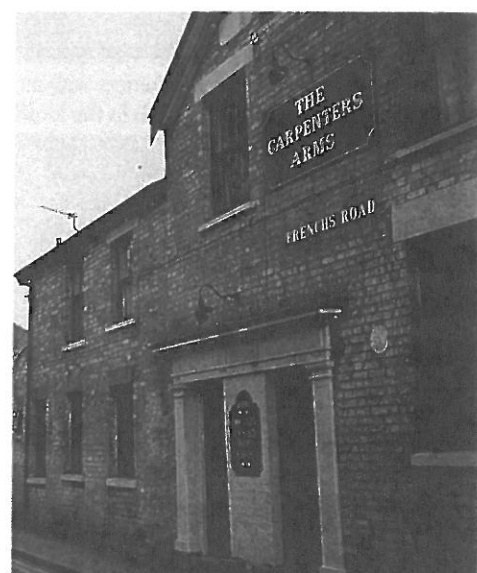


French's Road
The road contains a number of different types of memorials from the street name to inscriptions on a now re-used industrial complex. Pupils could be asked to:

- use buildings, date inscriptions and names along French's Road and on the old mill site to work out what has changed over the last 100 years
- talk to people living in French's Road about changes they remember
- use a local newspaper



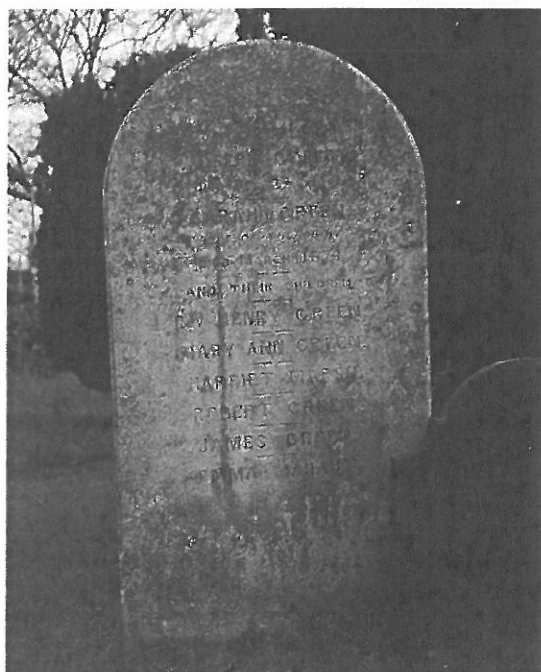
to find out about Barry Jacobs, who is commemorated on the inscription on Barry Annexe, 1986



Cemetery

There is a small Victorian cemetery on Histon Road, similar in layout to the much grander ones in London and Bradford. Pupils could:

- record in drawing or photography symbols about life and death from the graves
- construct some family trees from information on family plots
- make a note of the most popular first names of people who died before 1990, between 1900 and 1930 and between 1930 and 1960.



Industrial Cottage, 1887

- look in the census returns for 1881 and 1891 to find out who lived and worked here
- find out which industry the cottage was used for by visiting the Local Studies Library



English Heritage has recently published *A teacher's guide to Using Memorials*, by Sallie Purkis. The book aims to help you and your class find memorials and monuments in your locality and to unlock the story behind them. It shows how to analyse them as historical evidence, and how to make a record of them

so that the information they convey will be preserved for later generations.

The book costs £5.95 and is available from English Heritage, PO Box 229, Northampton, NN6 9RY. (Postage is included.) Please quote product code XP10661 (see order form on page 15).

an example of how we can help those with different needs. Jenny Thompson, who lives locally, visited with her guide dog. Jenny answered the questions thrown at her with great patience. We also had invaluable assistance from Pam Cowen, the local Social Services contact, who made a huge impression on the children. She raised our awareness and helped us understand how resourceful and adaptable visually impaired people have to be. We thought we could then try to put the knowledge we had gained to good use by looking at a historic site from a different point of view.

Three visits by the children to Sizergh Castle were planned. The first involved looking at the exterior of the building and thinking about life in Tudor times, paying attention to the furniture and portraits. On the second visit the children looked closely at particular aspects of the castle in order to understand and reproduce the intricacy of Tudor interior decor. On the third visit they made an audio tape describing particular Tudor rooms as a further aid for the visually impaired. The 30 pupils were split into five groups of six and each group had an adult leader. The groups were assigned different rooms and were given a brief which included reproducing ceilings or windows, describing portraits, matching wall panels and describing the room on tape.

The technology, art and craft work was mainly carried out over two days when coordinator Rob David, from Lancaster University, visited the school and worked alongside the adult group leaders. The children also made models from their own drawings of the castle. Grey clay was used because it replicates well the limestone finish particular to Sizergh Castle.

Modern technology – computers and the LOGO program – was also used to reproduce the ceiling designs and shapes in the wall panels. These were sent to the Royal College for the Blind in Hereford where they were copied through a Minolta process of thermal photocopying. This gives a slightly raised line which can be felt. The children had gained an understanding of Braille and the use of the Perkins Braille.

On the third site visit, the pupils described each of the five rooms they had studied in detail. Unfailingly patient and polite, they worked cooperatively and each produced a tape with the group leader. The project coordinator edited the groups' descriptions, and the school's recorder and guitar groups provided introductory music. Labels in large print and Braille were made and the work displayed. Attention remained focused on helping the visually impaired and credit must go to all the children and their adult helpers.

Below: examples of children's work from Frizington including, far right, a replica of the dining room ceiling at Sizergh, made from card, match sticks and paper

Barrow Schools and Furness Abbey

The Dissolution of the Monasteries provided the context for our study of Furness Abbey. The Abbey is a superb ruin: part of it is almost as it was 400 years ago, but other sections are no more than outlines in the grass. Because of timetable restrictions we had less time to spend on this study than on the others which produced some less polished outcomes. The students provided their groups with an introduction to visual impairment, and the dissolution of the monasteries.

The visit to Furness Abbey encouraged the children to learn about the layout of the site, the routine of a monk, and the different building periods and changes in design. Each group was assigned a part of the Abbey to study. The children had to consider the needs of the visually impaired and they were asked to choose a feature which could be reproduced in tactile form. This involved close observation which would allow an audio tape or a large print leaflet, describing the room, to be created at school. The chosen features ranged from plans of parts of the abbey, to models of gargoyles, plaques representing the shapes of windows and relief models of the masons' marks. The most ambitious model was a reconstruction, using art straws, of the rib structure of the infirmary chapel vault.

Large print guides were created on word processors back at school, but making the audio tapes in the classrooms was a mistake. Sound is vital to the visually impaired and the acoustics at Furness Abbey vary greatly from one room to the next. Recording in the roofed infirmary chapel would produce very different results to recording in the monks' lavatories. These were all lost in the classroom and we learnt an important lesson: it's vital to choose a site which can be revisited. The children could only go to Furness Abbey once and so did not have the opportunity to focus on the tasks one by one. In the other projects each visit had a single focus, for example letting the children concentrate on making the audio tape or becoming familiar with the site.

St. Paul's Church, Frizington, and Frizington Primary School

This school's development plan for 1994/1995 included a focus on equality of opportunity for all. Consequently it volunteered to take part in the project. The work was planned for the Spring Term with Year 5/6 children who would be working on a local history project studying the parish church during the first part of the term. Frizington is an ex-mining village which was mostly built in the 19th century. These children

had worked on a Victorian Britain topic the previous year and this formed background knowledge to their local history work.

It was hoped that by the end of the term the children would have become familiar with the parish church, and its history, and would have increased their awareness of the needs of the visually impaired. We were fortunate in having the help of Les Handcock, who carried out extensive research on Frizington and its parish church. This provided us with archive material, such as photocopied burial and baptism registers and extracts from newspapers and trade directories containing information about the parish church. Children were able to use this material, guide books and photographs to research information about the church. They also interviewed the vicar and vergers.

We spent four days working with Rob David and three students from Lancaster University, learning a great deal about visual impairment and how it affects people's lives. The children watched the *Anna's Story* video and put on spectacles which limited their vision in a various ways. Using this awareness we then visited the church to consider how we could make it accessible to visually impaired people.

On the following two visits the children were divided into six groups, each focusing on a different aspect of the church. The visits were spent creating and refining tactile material. A feature of the church is its variety of floor tiling. These tiles were reproduced in a variety of media – clay, art straws, fabric, wood and wire. Another group focused on the outside of the building – recreating each wall in clay. The group that tackled the making of a tactile floor plan found they had taken on an enormous task which involved much group discussion and mathematical investigation.

We decided to create a large print book and an audio cassette guide. The children visited the church to plan their text and then spoke rather than read it onto the tape. Recording took place in the church which helped produce gloriously echoey sounds. Time was running out and the large print book was produced in an afternoon. We used computers to experiment with different sizes and density of print but the children found it difficult to synthesise their spoken commentary into concise sentences for the book.

While the project was underway we contacted the RNIB New College, Worcester. The children found this enormously exciting. We exchanged tapes and school prospectuses and arranged for the visually impaired children to come to Frizington. The thought of having an audience gave a sense of purpose to the

Photographs: Rob David



children, who came into school the day after a site visit with suggestions of how to extend our work further. They also began to evaluate their work critically.

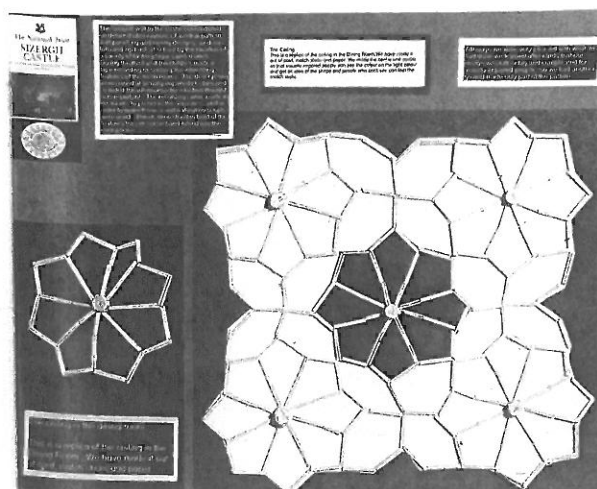
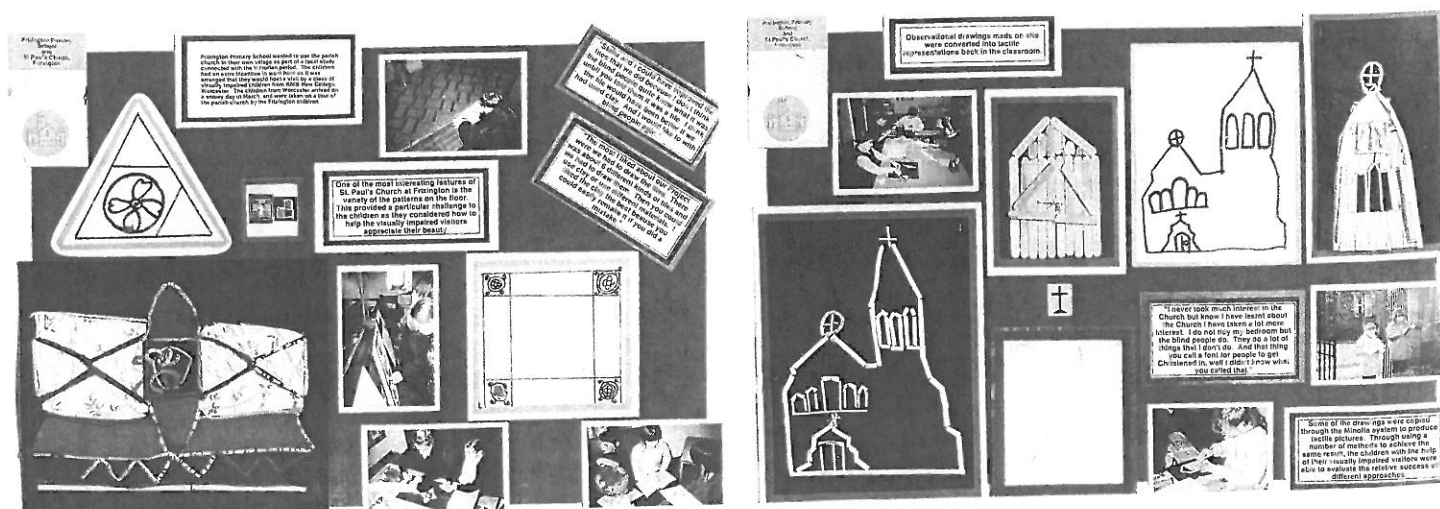
I was touched by the care that was shown by our children to the visually impaired children. This was accompanied by a sensitivity and a respect for their achievements. The vicar, who met us at the church, was so moved that he made us the subject of his weekly sermon. We learned a great deal from the visually impaired children and saw where we'd made mistakes, particularly on the audio tape, but we still achieved our objectives. The children worked with visually impaired children and appreciated their difficulties and achievements. They now have a knowledge of the parish church and its role in the community. We have all shared an exciting challenge and can take pride in what we have achieved. The exercise has been a community-wide morale booster – Frizington can be proud of its church, its children and their work.

Linking history with the needs of the visually impaired proved to be an extremely creative alliance. From the history point of view the approach generated a real need to know, and a desire to observe and record the details of features of the sites, knowing that the needs of the visually impaired demanded accuracy. At the same time the children became involved with understanding the needs of others, and were determined to learn and get things right. Although all the projects were clearly located within the context of the history National Curriculum, real learning was taking place in a range of other curriculum areas. After the children from RNIB New College, Worcester visited, the self-esteem of our own pupils increased. As one wrote, 'I thought the blind children liked their visit to our school and I am proud of what we have done'. #

Rob David, Department of Teaching and Education Studies, Lancaster University; Anne Mossop, Long Marton Primary School, Cumbria; Margaret Wiltshire, Head Teacher, Frizington Primary School, Cumbria



Top: the children of Frizington Primary School making clay models of Furness Abbey. Above: gathering research on a site visit to the 12th century ruin in Cumbria





Our Education Service often supports archaeological projects to help set up educational resources or services for schools and colleges. This is a round-up of some of those going on around the country

Archaeology round-up

Top: Gosbecks, a unique Romano-British site will become an Archaeological Park. Above: getting a handle on the past: at West Heslerton, North Yorkshire, children from local schools are able to touch and examine archaeological finds, including pottery and animal bones

Lighting up the Dark Ages at West Heslerton, North Yorkshire

At West Heslerton, North Yorkshire, archaeologists are completing a major excavation project, begun in 1986, examining an Early Anglo-Saxon Village. The project is funded by English Heritage as part of the national Rescue Archaeology programme.

This year, the last season of excavation, is concerned with the examination of a series of Late Roman and Anglo-Saxon features spanning the period from AD350 to AD850. During the summer term a number of schools visited the site and after seeing archaeology in action took part in activities aimed at increasing the understanding of the Anglo-Saxon period as well as the collection and interpretation of archaeological material. Children were able to handle a wide range of materials – including pottery and animal bone – examine seeds through a microscope, see costume reconstructions and see how some of the fabrics were produced. As the excavation progresses a series of worksheets was produced covering different aspects of the project.

During the holiday period, families visited the site at weekends and on Wednesdays to see the work in progress. In term-time schools could visit the site on any day other than Fridays by prior arrangement. Site visits for schools will continue until the end of October.

For a free leaflet and details of this project contact: Ashley Mainland, Education Officer, Heslerton Parish Project, c/o the Post Office West Heslerton, North Yorkshire, YO17 8RY.

Developments at Gosbecks in Colchester

Visiting an archaeological site can be a daunting prospect for many teachers, but at Gosbecks near Colchester this summer, children and their teachers have enjoyed a stimulating and different type of school visit.

Gosbecks, until recently farmland, is now to become an Archaeological Park. It is a unique Romano-British site comprising a Roman Theatre, a Romano-Celtic Temple and possibly a Bath House. The site dates from the late Iron-Age. However there are no visible remains save for a slight mound where the theatre once stood, so it was decided to indicate the buried archaeology by the use of white lines. These were to provide an ideal opportunity to school parties for measuring and mapping activities. Also this summer two small excavations were taking place on the site.

School parties began arriving in June and took part in practical investigations into the past. They measured the dimensions of the theatre and the temple, looked for Roman material lying on the ground and saw archaeologists in action. They asked questions and handled excavated material and were enthralled by what they saw. There were even some unplanned, but welcome extras: the metal detecting expert who had been asked to investigate the excavation site by the archaeologists and the person who turned up one day to carry out a resistivity survey on part of the site.

The teachers afterwards commented that pupils had been made to think about how people find out about the past. The children enjoyed the practical aspect of finding out things for themselves and went away with real images of the size of a Roman theatre or temple, or a memory of holding a piece of Roman pottery.

For a free illustrated leaflet and details of this project please contact: Janet Lumley, Education Officer, Museum Resource Centre, 14 Ryegate Street, Colchester CO1 1YG.

The Boxgrove excavation

In May 1994, national newspapers reported the find of a shin bone in a quarry at Boxgrove, near Chichester in Sussex. The bone, thought to be at least 500,000 years old, raised many questions: did the bone belong to a man or woman? Where was the rest of the skeleton? How did the person die? What kind of life had he had? The excavation continued in 1995, and it seemed a good idea to involve local schools. We had two main aims: to allow children to understand some of the processes of archaeology by watching archaeologists at work, and to inspire an interest in prehistory. This is not widely studied in schools, and we hoped to give teachers confidence in an unfamiliar topic.

A seconded teacher, employed by English Heritage, coordinated the project locally, in conjunction with the LEA advisory service. One of the archaeologists from the site team was able to devote some time to the education project, and she and the coordinator went into schools to talk to children. One of the first and most difficult concepts to get across was the time-scale involved; a period as long as 500,000 years is difficult to comprehend. Various time line methods were used. One primary school used cut-out squares of paper to represent 100 years; these were coloured and stuck

together into a long roll which was laid out in the school playground. When the comparison was made between Queen Victoria living 100 years ago, and the Boxgrove hominid living 500,000 years ago, the children began to grasp the vast scale.

What life may have been like for these early people at Boxgrove was introduced by the children handling genuine flint tools, and considering how they were made and used. Comparisons were made between a nodular flint, in its natural state, a rough unfinished hand-axe, and a smaller, more finely finished hand-axe. The children appreciated the amount of work and skill that had gone into their manufacture. Holding a tool that was first held half a million years ago is inspiring, even for a sophisticated child of the Nineties!

Small groups of children were encouraged to discuss two main questions. Could the early inhabitants of Boxgrove talk, and if not, how did they communicate?

What may have happened to the rest of the body?

On site, the geological aspects of the area and the methods of excavation were the two main points of interest. Boxgrove 500,000 years ago, was a beach at the foot of a cliff. Today the sea is 10km away. Different layers cover the area where the major finds have been made, and these can clearly be seen – ideal conditions for demonstrating the principles of stratigraphy. Many of the children were content to watch the archaeologists at work but others recorded what they saw by painting and drawing.

A free booklet on Boxgrove is available to teachers from English Heritage Education Service, 429 Oxford Street, London W1R 2HD.



Top: excavation artwork by a student from Bognor Regis Community College

Investigating history with BBC Education

'If a picture is worth a 1,000 words, then a site visit is worth 1,000 pictures!' (Maureen Farrell, Loughside Primary School, Dumfries). Chris Durbin reports

The new *Investigating History for Primary Schools* package – the result of a collaboration between the BBC and English Heritage – will enable you to develop your approaches to history. English Heritage's skill is to create interest in the historic environment through imaginative, investigative educational activities outside the classroom. BBC Education's strength is to bring this interest to a wider audience in a stimulating way. Furthermore, it can take you to meet people who are striving to develop their skills as teachers for the benefit of their pupils. Drawing on the strength of both organisations, two programmes have been produced for broadcast in October, with repeats in February 1996.

INSET and television

Many school inspection reports refer to the lack of investigative approaches to history. Television programmes are used passively, activities such as copying information from books and completing photocopied worksheets are perhaps all too common. The two *Teaching Today* programmes and accompanying support materials enable you to design a staff development session to address this lack of an investigative approach. Furthermore, they will enable you to develop imaginative outdoor work in your own backyard and at historic sites. This package encourages both good practice in teaching history and good practice in the delivery of in-service training too.

Television programmes on video in the context of in-service training are good at establishing the issues, raising questions, enabling teachers to see how other teachers practise and seeing things from the perspective of other teachers and pupils. However, they don't allow you to discuss topics with the people featured. Television programmes need to be used in an active way by selecting certain sections as a stimulus, and preparing associated activities in between the chosen clips.

Photographs: Mike Corbishley

Watch and do!

Discussion agendas in response to a clip can take place in many ways:

- Agree-disagree statements
- Linking questions or answers
- Categorising or sorting
- Ranking or prioritising

Having watched some of the video, design a task which enables the INSET participants to plan some teaching of their own, based on agreed principles. This might be: brainstorming related to your own backyard and local sites; creating and listing tasks associated with a site visit, or creating activities for local history.

The *Teaching Today* programmes can be used for self-managed INSET by an individual teacher; school-managed INSET run by the history co-ordinator; LEA or other staff development body INSET; or INSET designed by historic site education officers.

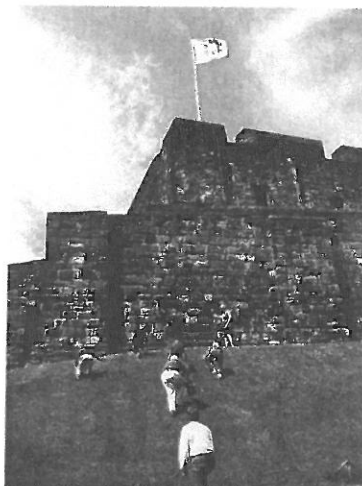
The pack includes a structure for INSET session activities and tasks to develop your own practice as well as further contacts to support development. Good luck! Please let us know how you used the programmes and related support materials. We welcome constructive criticism to enable future projects to meet your needs.

Chris Durbin,
Education Officer, BBC Education

The transmission dates are:

3 Oct 1995 *Investigating History – a pile of old stones!?*
10 Oct 1995 *Investigating History – your own backyard*

The *Investigating History* pack, containing both 30-minute video programmes and an INSET teacher's booklet, by Jennie Fordham and Liz Hollinshead, English Heritage Education Officers, is available from English Heritage, PO Box 229, Northampton, NN6 9RY, £26.99 inc VAT and postage. Please quote product code XT10818. See page 15 for order form.



Top: on location at Carlisle Castle. Above: teaching children a useful lesson – how to use the local historic environment