

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT TODAY

Herefordshire Council's Historic Environment Newsletter

Vol 5 Issue 2

July 2002

Community Archaeology

Learning about the history of where you live can be an entertaining and often rewarding past-time. In recent years this interest has exploded in popularity with many television and radio programmes encouraging people to investigate the history and archaeology around them.

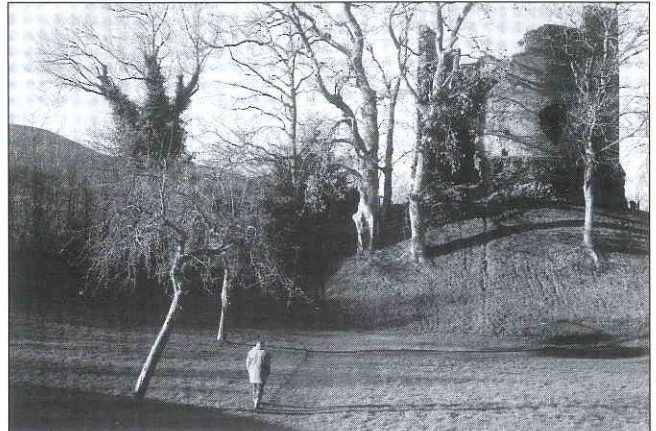
People are realising that others share their interest in local history and that historical research does not have to be a lonely individual pursuit peering over old books and maps but may involve working in or forming a community group, meeting new friends and even getting your hands dirty!

One of *Herefordshire Archaeology's* commitments is to encourage local groups to pursue this interest and to build links with the local communities throughout the county. This takes two forms of involvement.

Firstly, by liaising with communities over specific projects. Recent community work has included helping to survey Leintwardine churchyard as part of the 'Caring for God's Acre' project and the enhancement and survey of a moated site in Pembridge. Both projects are funded by the Local Heritage Initiative. You can read more about the Pembridge site inside this issue.

Our second link to the community is the organisation of specific events that try to cater for as wide a variety of people as possible. From Historic Landscape Walks to the Annual Symposium, we try to inform the public of new discoveries within the county. This month a full programme of events have been organised for everyone to enjoy as part of the West Midlands Archaeology Weeks and National Archaeology Days, which you can read about in the next article.

West Midlands Archaeology Weeks and National Archaeology Days



Longtown Castle and its historical borough will be a venue for one of the forthcoming West Midlands Archaeology Week events

West Midlands Archaeology Week is a bi-annual event that is organised nationally by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA). Usually events are arranged over a single week in July but this year events are organised over a fortnight, running from 8th to 19th July.

Herefordshire Archaeology has organised a series of events to take place across the county with something for young and old alike; from walks around towns and the countryside to talks on the landscape. There is also an opportunity for children to bring in objects to be identified and to ask questions about archaeology in our 'Antiquarian Roadshow'.

Archaeology Weeks then lead onto the weekend of 20th and 21st July and 'National Archaeology Days'. Organised annually by the CBA in association with the Young Archaeologist Club. This year *Herefordshire Archaeology* are leading a series of events with the theme of 'Herefordshire Castles and their Landscapes'.

We hope to see you at one or more of the forthcoming events. To find out more, see the flyer inside this copy of HET.

Inside: People ⇒ Events ⇒ Landscapes ⇒ Roads ⇒ Castles ⇒ Survey

“The aim is to identify feasible environmental enhancement initiatives that will maintain, or even strengthen, the local landscape character..”

Life in Living Landscapes

Herefordshire Council along with English Nature is currently developing an innovative pilot scheme to identify and promote projects that will enhance the environment. The “Lifescapes” project is being developed under the LEADER+ grant scheme and concentrates on land bordering the rivers Wye, Lugg, Arrow and Frome. River based schemes will therefore feature prominently, but not to the exclusion of other proposals.

The project will be looking at environmental opportunities through a mapping project, which will include the cultural, social and economic influences as well as nature conservation and biodiversity. The aim is to identify feasible environmental enhancement initiatives that will maintain, or even strengthen, the local landscape character and which are economically viable and acceptable to local people.

The project will start with an overall mapping exercise to pull together all the relevant information that already exists. A project officer will be appointed to establish links with local groups and communities who show an interest in the aims of the project. More detailed maps of individual areas can then be worked up by local communities. Local people can use these maps to identify future projects that can be carried out in their local area.

The “Lifescapes” project is initially a 2 year pilot scheme to see whether local communities are enthusiastic about local environmental issues. Due to this time constraint, the number of individual projects that can be undertaken will be limited. However, if there is sufficient interest, it may be possible to extend the programme or to offer help to communities who have projects that could not be carried out in the first 2 years.

*Jane Patton
Landscape Officer*

..NEWS...People...NEWS...People..

As reported in the previous HET (Vol. 5,1), following the successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the ‘Historic Herefordshire On-Line’ project, two people have joined *Herefordshire Archaeology* during May.

Miranda Greene has been appointed as the New Audiences Officer and her primary role is to update the information on the Sites and Monuments Record and to format the data so that it is understandable and more accessible to the general public. This is being developed to go onto the internet.

Toria Forsyth-Moser is the Education Officer and will be promoting the Sites and Monuments Record as a resource that can be used by schoolteachers. This will involve the creation of educational material and will be available to download from the internet. The information will relate to key stages in the National Curriculum with regard to particular historical periods, for instance the Tudors and the Victorians.

People news can also report that Rebecca Roseff, Sites and Monuments Officer is now working part time and her job share partner is Melissa Seddon who joined us in June and previously worked for Historic Scotland. While James Bryne will job share part time with Jo Hackman, the Council’s Ecologist. He will be advising on ecological issues within planning applications.



The Hereford Public Library and Art Gallery, built in 1874, is one of the Victorian buildings to be included in the on-line educational source

Henge on the Edge?

An earthwork at Apostles Farm on the edge of the south-facing scarp of an extensive ridge overlooking the Wye near Eardisley has long been an enigmatic monument. Surveying it in the 1930's, the archaeologists of the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments wisely refused to commit themselves and described it as 'an undated enclosure'. Since then, however, it has come to be regarded by English Heritage and others as a medieval 'ringwork', or fortified enclosure. While this cannot entirely be discounted as a possibility, it is certainly odd that the ditch is surrounded by such a prominent bank. The area enclosed by the ditch is partly level, and partly mounded. Recent aerial photography has led to the suggestion that the site might, in fact, be a henge monument of later Neolithic date (c.3000 - 2000BC).

To test this idea, *Herefordshire Archaeology* staff and volunteers have been carrying out a survey of the site. The drawn survey has reinforced the impression of precise circularity of the monument, but the geophysical survey has offered some indication that there were two causeways across the ditch exactly opposite one another, north and south. The date and exact character of the monument remain in question, nonetheless.

Brockhampton In View

In preparation for a full survey next winter in partnership with The National Trust, *Herefordshire Archaeology* has carried out a rapid field assessment of the Brockhampton Estate near Bromyard. The estate is unusual in that most of its land comprises the entirety of the parish of Brockhampton. Besides the famous Lower Brockhampton moated manor house, numerous features of archaeological and landscape interest were noted. Some 54 sites were observed during a day's reconnaissance across the estate, including field lynchets and boundary banks in the wider landscape. In the landscaped park of the 1760's around the mansion built on higher ground near the Bromyard to Worcester road, a prospect terrace and a series of earthwork platforms were noted.

Keith Ray
County Archaeologist



Photo reproduced courtesy of Chris Musson (99.MB.0029)
A Prehistoric henge or Medieval ringwork? The earthwork at Apostles Farm, Eardisley

Court Moat at Pembridge

As part of a Local Heritage Initiative project in Pembridge being undertaken by the village Amenity Trust, we have surveyed the moated site at Court Farm, next to the parish church. Between 1282 and 1301, this site became the residence of Margaret, the widow of Roger Mortimer of Wigmore. Court Farm itself dates to the seventeenth century, and the western arm of the moat was filled in to build it. The remainder of the moat is the most prominent feature of the site today, being both broad and deep.

In recent years it has become overgrown, but over the course of the winter, Tony Norman and a group of local volunteers have cleared the undergrowth leaving only mature trees. This helped the survey considerably, and it soon became evident that a marked lip to the inner edge of the moat might represent the former line of a curtain wall, indicating that perhaps the moated manor site was defended. Unfortunately, it wasn't possible to confirm this in the follow-up geophysical survey, due to the existence of tree roots. The owner of the farm nonetheless pointed to the location of a (previously unreported) university excavation of the 1970s within the moated area. To the east of the moated site in an adjacent ploughed field, stones have frequently been found during cultivation works. A limited geophysical survey confirmed that structures are likely to exist here. This area may lie within an attached outer enclosure of the 'castle' that takes in the whole of the churchyard.

Tim Hovord
Archaeological Projects Officer

Mock Castle Mania at Croft!

It seems that there were no lengths to which some people would not go in pursuit of recreating the past during the early nineteenth century. One of the most remarkable discoveries in the closing days of the Croft Castle Estate survey this winter, was of a series of earthworks found near School Lane, Luston.

These works appeared at first to be simply the result of localised quarrying. However, 'the quarry' in question seemed a bit odd when it took the form of a massive circular trench with further linking trenches. The circular ditch enclosed a level area, but was bordered eastwards by a massive crescent-shaped length of bank that reminded us of the main bailey enclosure bank at Richard's Castle. It seemed for all the world like a mock medieval earthwork castle that was visible from the carriage-way of c.1820 that swept up towards the mansion from the south-west lodge of the Estate.

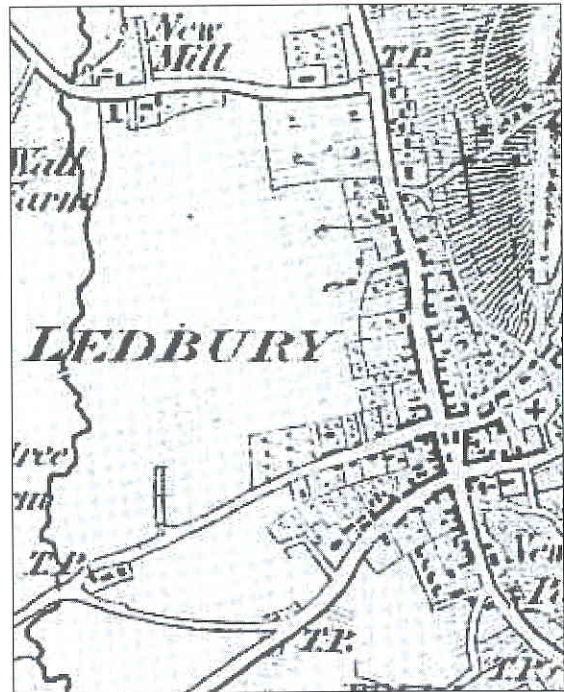
Although we thought the interim interpretation attractive, it was not until we saw the carriage-way bridge over School Lane that it was clear that we were on the right track. This small stone structure has lost its arch, but the abutments on either side take the form of mock-medieval gateway bastions, reproduced in miniature.

*Tim Hoverd
Archaeological Projects Officer*

Toll Roads

A group of SMR volunteers have been mapping the turnpike roads of Herefordshire for the past four months. This is part of an overall attempt to map the variety of road types in the county from Roman times including drove roads, enclosure roads, causeways, packhorse roads and turnpikes. The Herefordshire toll roads date from 1721, developing quite early to serve a rich agricultural area. The roads were the responsibility of turnpike trusts named by an Act of Parliament. Trustees had to appoint surveyors, have the roads maintained and raise the tolls to finance their operation. Turnpike roads became the responsibility of the County Council from 1888, by which time the Turnpike Trusts had ceased to exist.

*Tony Reeves
SMR Volunteer*



Reproduced from 1831 Ordnance Survey Map

Ledbury tollroads date from 1721 and are some of the earliest in the county. Note the number of turnpikes and toll houses around Ledbury, labelled as T.P. upon the map

'Focusing' on Castles

Miranda Greene is currently working on the 122 castles and mottes of Herefordshire for the SMR website (see the *People* article in this issue). Every castle will be photographed and described. Issues of how long it took them to be built, what they were for and what they were made of will also be explored. The results will tie in with the Hereford and Worcester Earth Heritage Trust's work who are currently producing trail leaflets on geological themes (available at Tourist Offices). Some of these are based on buildings, for instance at Goodrich Castle. Many of the website photographs of castles will be taken by volunteers, such as this one below, taken by Paul Wood.



The impressive motte in the village of Almeley