

**UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE**



**Annual Report on the Museum of archaeology and Ethnology, 1974/5**

University Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge

Annual Report 1974/5

The Board of the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology presents to the University the 87th Annual Report of the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology for the academical year 1974/5. As the General Board had decided that, as an economy measure, most annual reports shall no longer be printed, this report is the first one to be produced in mimeographed form.

Staff

Curator: Peter Gathercole

Assistant P.L. Carter (Archaeology)

Curators: M.D. Cra'ster (Archaeology)  
D.A. Swallow (Anthropology)

Faculty Assistant Staff with certain Museum responsibilities:

Technician: P. Smith                      Assistant: J. Osbourn  
D. Stringer                              Photographer: G. Owen

Secretary (1/2 time)

Miss C. Coombs (to April 1975)

Mrs. K. Stringer

Honorary Keepers

Dr. K. Cameron (Brass rubbings)  
Mr. E. Higgs (Faunal collections)  
Dr. G.X. Jones (Nigerian collections)  
Miss J. Liversidge (Romano-British collections)  
Dr. C.B.M. McBurney (Palaeolithic collections)  
Mrs. J. Roth (Fijian collections)

Attendants (part-time)

C. Bloy, W. Cox, E. Gent, F. Whitehead.

Museum Reorganisation

Activities during the year under review were dominated by the demands of long term reorganisation. It had been recognised since 1972, when the Faculty Board dropped its request for a new building at the Sidgwick Site, that external storage would be required in order to create space within the Museum for re-organisation of collections. Subsequently, the concept of research areas, rather than storage, was developed, whereby collections not on display would be properly housed and made accessible for examination in adjacent study areas. This concept was applied to the design of the external store allocated by the General Board at Shorts' Factory, Madingley Road. The design, approved by the General Board in March, comprised 87 units of dexion racking arranged in five bays, a work area with adjacent sink-bench and fume extractor unit, a study area, and a self-contained clothing store adapted

from the serving bays of the Factory Canteen. This store is adequate to house the Saxon, Medieval, and general prehistoric collections, excluding Palaeolithic and Romano-British material, and the African and Arabian ethnographic collections. Building work by the Estate Management Building service began in July and was completed shortly after the end of the academic year. The movement of collections was delayed, however, pending a decision by the General Board on the installation of intruder and fire alarms.

All aspects of storage, including labelling and cataloguing, will be standardised both at Shorts' and in the Museum. For example, seven box sizes are used, the boxes being modular to facilitate ease of handling and stacking. During the year the Assistant Curators continued the checking, sorting and boxing of the collections scheduled for removal. Those completed were the Arabian, North and Ear<sup>4</sup>- African ethnographic collections, and the Medieval, Saxon and Prehistoric Near Eastern collections.

In addition over 1500 catalogue entries were made, the bulk of them being of material held by the Museum for many years. As part of her sorting of the Saxon collections, Miss Cra'ster brought together for the first time all the pottery from Girton cemetery, excavated in 1886, some sherds of which had never even been washed or accessioned. In all, 529 boxes of material were prepared for removal.

800 boxes were made in the Workshop by Mr. Stringer. Mr. Smith began construction of a large clothing cabinet for the Shorts' clothing store, where Mr. Stringer adapted and installed some of the surplus cupboards presented in 1974 by St. Johns' College muniment Room. Use was also made of shelving removed in 1973 from the North Lecture Room.

Considerable thought was given to the problem of adapting the Card Catalogue to future needs. Since its inception in <sup>1</sup>920, the card catalogue had been organised chronologically by yearly accessions, i.e. it was a direct copy of the Accession Register, although each annual group of accessions had been grouped geographically. This arrangement severely restricted use of the catalogue to determine, for example, the number or type of objects held, and had other drawbacks. Using a scheme devised by Mr. Carter, the Assistant Curators spent two weeks early in the Long Vacation reorganising the entire index of over 55,000 cards into a geographical classification, some parts of which were further subdivided into smaller area, period, or typological units. The best example so far is the arrangement by period and parishes of cards referring to British archaeology. This reorganisation has already led to increased and speedier use of the Catalogue. A start has also been made on the checking and sorting of cards referring to specimens acquired between 1883 and 1919, which are often inaccurately classed. This valuable work is being undertaken voluntarily by Mrs. Joan Cunning, a retired librarian from Melbourne, Victoria.

Packing space being very limited, it became necessary to turn the Egyptian Room, the Medieval section of the Clarke Hall, and parts of the African displays in the Babington Hall into work areas. No new permanent displays were prepared. Dr. Norman Hammond arranged a temporary exhibit dealing with his excavations

in 1972 at Lubaantun Belize. Mr. Osbourn displayed a number of new accessions in three cases at the entrance, including a unique collection from the Wola people of the New Guinea Highlands, obtained by Dr. Paul Sillitoe in 1974. Refurbishing of some existing displays was undertaken by the attendant staff, particularly those dealing with Arctic America, Sarawak, New Guinea, New Hebrides and the Banks Islands.

Because of severe economies throughout the University, the re-painting programme in the galleries had to be frozen. The Faculty and Museum buildings were completely rewired, and fire and some intruder precautions were considerably improved.

The Workshop staff repaired or restored 140 objects, many in the course of sorting and improving the reserve collections. Regular maintenance was maintained on the building, furniture, fittings and cases, some of which are 60 years old. In September Mr. P. Smith and Mr. B. Denston (of the Department of Physical Anthropology) assisted in the excavation of three Neolithic skeletons discovered during excavations by Mr. F. Pryor at Peterborough. The discovery was consolidated in situ and brought to the Museum in its matrix for further examination and cleaning. The workshop staff also completed a number of jobs for excavations organised by members of the Department of Archaeology, notably the Somerset Levels project directed by Dr. Coles.

#### Loans

85 Objects from West Africa and Oceania were lent to the art gallery at Kettle's Yard in March for a month's display. The exhibition was arranged by Mr. M. Brawne and the objects were chosen and the catalogue written by Dr. G.I. Jones. Attendances exceeded 2,500 people. Small collections of local folk life material were deposited, at the Cambridge City and County Folk Museum, and a chaff slicer at the Farmland Museum, Haddenham.

#### Publications

Carter, P.L. & Vogel, J.C. The dating of industrial assemblages from stratified sites in Eastern Lesotho. Man (N.S.), 9 (197M: 557-570

Gathercole, P. (Editor, with B.F. and H. Leach; Introduction, pp.11-17) Comparatively Speaking: Studies in Pacific Material Culture, 1921-72.

by H.D. Skinner, Dunedin, Otago University Press 1974

#### Other Staff activities

The Curatorial Staff gave their usual quota of lectures during the year for the Tripos. The Curator continued to serve on the Cambridgeshire Working Party on Museums and on the Ethnographic Film Committee of the Royal Anthropological Institute. He was appointed to the editorial panel of the R.A.I. Newsletter. He visited Dublin in January on behalf of the Australian Government to report on the Aboriginal collections at the National Museum of Ireland, and gave lectures at Leicester University, Saffron Walden Museum, and at Portsmouth for the Museums Diploma Course. Miss Cra'ster was appointed to the Area Advisory Committee for archaeology set up by the D.O.E., and continued to serve on the Cambridge-

shire Archaeological and the Nene Valley Research Committees. She remained editor of the Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society. Mrs. Roth, Honorary Keeper of Fijian collections, reported a gratifying increase in requests for information and photographs from research workers in Fiji, Australia and England.

#### Photography

Mr. Owen reports: Photographic facilities improved during the year because of an 80\$ increase in working space. 212 orders for prints, negatives or slides were completed for the Faculty, of which 157 were for the Departments, 12 for the Museum, and 43 for other organizations or individuals via the Museum, mostly relating to objects in the collections. 18 of the external orders were from publishing houses. 17 reproduction licenses were issued in respect of photographs sold. Work was undertaken at archaeological sites for Dr. Alexander and Dr. Coles, and a record made of the demolition of the Bun Shop on the Lion Yard Site, a building having long associations with the Faculty.

#### Crowther-Beynon Fund

Grants amounting to £3,240 were made to the following for the projects stated: Museum - Processing of collections for re-housing in new storage; improvements of Card Catalogue; Purchases and contingencies; preparation of Layard MSS on Malekula. Professor Daniel - Departments of Archaeology research fund. H.K. Cameron - Brass rubbings collection. Cambridgeshire Archaeological Committee. Drs. R. & B. Allchin - Fieldwork in Pakistan. Dr. J. Coles - Fieldwork in Somerset. Dr. N. Hammond - Survey of prehistoric settlement in northern Belize. J. Leach - Completion of Trobriand film project. H. Crellin - Field photography in Ghana. T. Holland - Excavations in N. Syria.

#### Visitors

The number of general visitors was 13,604, compared to 13,533 in 1973/4 and 13,620 in 1972/3. This levelling off of attendances was due to the stabilisation in the number of group visits by school and other parties, which was 110 compared to 114 in 1973/4.

It is probable that no significant increase in the number of general visitors will occur until new and more up to date displays are installed. The following came to examine particular collections:

Mr. C. Brett, University of Brisbane (Mongolian weapons);  
 Dr. A. Claerhout, Ethnographic Museum, Antwerp; Cultural Attache, Canadian High Commission, London; Miss L. Johnson, University of British Columbia (Pacific North West Coast collections); Mr. B. Kernot, Victoria University of Wellington (Maori ^addles);  
 Mr. and Mrs. J. Lewisohn, New York (Cook collections)<sup>1</sup> Mr. D. Newton, Museum of Primitive Art, New York (Melanesian carvings);  
 Mr. and Mrs. S. Park, Otago Museum (Torres Straits' and Maori collections); Mr. C. Peters, University of Auckland (Maori collections); Miss Rosier, Monash University (musical instruments); Mr. R. Ohtsuka, University of Tokyo (Landtman collection, New Guinea); Mrs. F. Silbennan, Peabody Museum, Harvard (museum registration); Mr. K. Wildman, Otago Medical School (Maori collections).

The Museum was also visited by members of the Standing Commission of Museums and Galleries, a party of Soviet Archaeologists attending a conference organised by the Department of Archaeology, a group

of architects and civil servants concerned with the design of the new Ethnographical Museum, Stockholm, members of the conference on the university teaching of archaeology organised by Professor Daniel, and by ethnographers from the Brighton, Horniman, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool and Saffron Walden Museums. A considerable number of research students from other Universities, as well as those within the Faculty, were given access to the archaeological reserve collections.

#### Problems for the future

The thorough re-organisation of collections now under way should fundamentally improve standards of care, documentation and access throughout the museum. For example, the checking of a large section of the African collections by Miss Swallow has led to more accurate classifications into tribal divisions, the registration of considerable numbers of unregistered specimens and clearer definitions of provenance. To maintain an adequate momentum in overall reorganisation, however, such particular improvement' can only be of a preliminary nature. There is bound to be considerable dislocation of existing facilities and temporary closure of certain collections from time to time. These difficulties cannot be avoided given the nature of the tasks involved and the many routine demands made on the small-sized staff. The decision was made at the end of the year to prepare for the Faculty Board a detailed long term plan integrating existing proposals for Ground, First Floor and external storage reorganisation into a more comprehensive development. Such a long term plan, which will be reported on in the next annual report, will help to reduce the inconveniences attendant on efforts to improve standards of care, storage and display.

The Museum Committee is much encouraged by the fact that despite present financial economies, the General Board approved the construction of the Shorts' store and a number of nonrecurring grants for work connected with this project. It remains true, however, that at present the University lacks funds to provide for the adequate staffing and maintenance of the Museum in relation to modern requirements. The fact that this is also the case for other university museums emphasises the need to establish an overall policy for all these institutions.

ACCESSIONS 1974-1975

- Beveridge, Mr. B: Mesolithic and Neolithic flints from the Andoversford area, Glos. (75. 1-20); and from the Duxford area, Cambs. (75. 124-144); Roman Pottery, Chronicle Hills, Thriplow, Cambs. (75. 101-121)
- Biddle, Mr. M: Medieval potsherds excavated from castle site, Therfield, Herts. (74. 515-525).
- Breay, Rev. J: Medieval jar, Meldreth church, Cambs. (751 122).
- Cra'ster, Miss M: Buckle and knife, Saxon cemetery, Melbourn, Cambs. (75. 123).
- Denston, Mr. B: Iron Age potsherds, Trumpington, Cambridge (75. 83).
- Greenfield, Mr. E: Collection of pottery excavated from Roman villa, Great Staughton, Huntingdon (75. 86-100).
- Higgs, Mr. E.S: Collection of Palaeolithic flints excavated 1551-55 from various sites in Tripolitania, Libya (75. 211, 213-219).
- \* Hugh-Jones S. & C: Collection of vessels, tools and equipment, Barasana and Baru group, Columbia (75. 151-164),
- \* Humphrey, Dr. C: Collection of equipment and religious objects, Mongolia (75. 65-82).
- Jacobi, Dr. R: Cast of hafted Mesolithic chisel, Calf Hole Cave, Yorks. (75. 85).
- Knight, Miss J: Beaker from burial, Exning, Suffolk (75. 21 ) .
- McBurney, Dr. C: Large collection of Palaeolithic flints, excavate\* over the years from the following sites:- 1942-47, 1951-55 Libya - Bir Dufan, Ed Dabba, Hajj Creiem, Haua Pteah, Misurata, Sirte, Wadi Deraa, and other sites; (75. 205-210, 212, 220-240 ) . 1958-64 Sites in Lebanon, Cyprus and France (75. 252-256); Hoxne, Suffolk (75. 197); Linton, Cambs. (75. 198); Northfleet, Kent (75. 203); Derbyshire - Ash Tree Cave, Badger Hole, Bridgend Pot, Cathole, Mother Grundy's Parlour, Nanna's Cavr, Savory's Hole (75. 184-192). Wales - Coygan, Gough's Cave, Lion's Cave, Little Hoyle (75. 195-196, 199-200).
- Jersey - La Cotte a la Chevre, La Cotte de St. Brelade (75. 193-194).
- \* Patterson Brown, Mrs. E: Large collection of tools, weapons, clothes, ornaments, etc. from the Nar, Sara group, S. Chad (75. 22-65).
- Rumble, Mr. G.W: Collection of tourist trade replicas of Jivara tools and equipment, Quito, Ecuador (75- 166-188)V

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1 Obtained with, the assistance of a grant from the Crovther-Beynon Fund.

Sillitoe, Dr. P: Large collection of tools, equipment and ornaments of the Wola, S. Highlands, New Guinea (74. 464-512)

Thompson, Dr. J: Carving, pot and textiles, Mexico, Peru and Bolivia (75. 145-150); maize cobs, Pueblo, U.S.A. (75. 165).

Trump, Dr. D: Flint tools and Iron Age sherds, Soham, Cambs. (75. 84).

DEPOSITS

Chantler, Mr. J: Collection of masks, carvings and other ethnographic material from Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone (75. D. 1-55).

Cuming Collection: A large quantity of weapons and other ethnographic material for E. , S. and W. Africa., N. and C. America, S.E. Asia, China, India and the East Indies, (from Cuming Museum, London: 72.D. 1-51).

Webb, Mr. P.J: Iron Age stone head, Minmere, Suffolk (75. D.56).

\* Obtained with the assistance of a grant from the Crowther-Beynon Fund