

# newsletter

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## GAG AGM Event in Worcester

**A date for your diaries – the AGM is to be held at The Hive, Worcester on 21 March 2015**



The Hive, Worcester

[How to get here](#)

The AGM will include the election of new Committee members; this year seven of the current eight members are due to stand down. The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer have all completed two consecutive terms in their respective posts, and are ineligible to be re-elected to those posts. We therefore need as many nominations for committee as possible. Nomination forms have already been circulated via email, please consider standing!

In addition to the AGM, the day will include short presentations about illustration projects, current work or issues relating to techniques and standards. Time is to be included to allow for as much discussion as possible around the presentation subjects.

Lunch is not provided, but there are many bakeries and cafes within 5 minutes walk of the venue, as well as the cafe within the building itself. Discussions and presentations are expected to continue til 4:30pm.

The meeting is being held in the Studio which has facilities for all kinds of presentations, and all Graphics Archaeology Group members are invited to contribute, if you have questions to raise, or work to show. The idea is that we have the chance to bring ideas along which would be of interest to fellow professionals.

Cost for the day will be £10 for ClfA members and £15 for non-members. In the evening there will be a buffet at [The Paul Pry](#) (a nearby pub with a listed interior) for an additional £4 charge. For those who wish to stay over, there will be a Sunday morning walk about Worcester's archaeology led by James Dinn MCIfA, Worcester City Archaeologist.

To book for the event, visit the Eventbrite site below:

<http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/current-issues-in-the-graphics-archaeology-profession-tickets-15708262837>

From the Chair

# Chartership!

Now that the IfA has become the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), it's all change again for GAG – you will have seen our new logo, colour scheme and branding, but what does Chartership mean?

*Members of GAG committee were among those pictured here attending the launch of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists at the Museum of London in December 2014*



The big news at the moment is that Chartership is upon us! On 9 December IfA became the CIfA at its official launch and AGM, held at the Museum of London. Chartership takes us to a new level of professional recognition. It is a significant achievement and is absolutely fundamental to the future of the whole profession. (It should be noted that at this stage it is the Institute itself that is Chartered and not its individual members.)

On a practical level, this will involve changes in the way CIfA is governed. Briefly, Executive Committee is replaced by a Board of Directors while the current Council is replaced by an Advisory Council. This latter will be drawn partly from elected members as previously but will also include a representative from each of the Special Interest Groups. Each SIG has to elect its representative at its AGM and the dates of these are likely to be shifted about to conform to the timetable of the Advisory Council. We have not yet had the opportunity to formally elect our representative and until this happens we have had to nominate someone to be co-opted as the GAG representative to the Advisory Council. At the last committee meeting we agreed to nominate Liz Gardner as our interim Advisory Council representative – well done Liz! A formal election will be conducted as part of the committee elections at the next GAG AGM.

Incidentally, it would be good to see a few more GAG members on the Advisory Committee. Next time the call for nominations comes out, if you have the time to commit to attend the meetings (and it's normally just two per year) you should really think about standing for election. I can tell you it is a rewarding and worthwhile experience.

**Steve Allen MCIfA**  
*Chair, Graphic Archaeology Group*

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## GAG Committee (until March 2015):

Steve Allen MCIfA	<i>Chair</i>
Laura Templeton MCIfA	<i>Treasurer, Events</i>
Lesley Collett MCIfA	<i>Secretary / Newsletter Production</i>
Drew Smith MCIfA	<i>Exhibitions / Assessment</i>
Liz Gardner MCIfA	<i>Assessment / Advisory Council Rep</i>
Tom Small MCIfA	<i>Website</i>
Jennie Anderson MCIfA	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>
Leeanne Whitelaw MCIfA	

**Contact: [issig@archaeologists.net](mailto:issig@archaeologists.net)**

# CIfA Conference 2015

## The Future of Your Profession 15– 17 April, Cardiff

As ever we put in an application to run a GAG session at the Annual Conference and this has been accepted. This makes five years in succession where we have had a formal session at the Conference – last year it was standing room only! We are writing to potential speakers right now but if any of you reading this want to present a paper – say 20 minutes length on the theme of the session, please do send in an abstract! The session proposal submitted reads as follows:

### **“We Do Not Do That Any More”: The Future of the Graphics Profession in Archaeology**

*In the (not so) recent past, it was fairly easy to divide graphics professionals into ‘Illustrators’ or ‘Surveyors’– with a degree of overlap when it came to preparing the final images for publication! The way that the graphics field of our profession has changed in the last 20 years means that this is no longer the case. It is no longer possible for any individual practitioner to be fully proficient in each and every aspect of archaeological graphics. Yet far from de-skilling individual practitioners, this ought to mean that individual skills should be gaining in value and recognised as a specialist contribution to the project team and the eventual project goal. This is where our future as part of the profession should be heading.*

*This session aims to explore this collaboration and showcase good practice and teamwork from the point of view of the graphics specialist. It will highlight recent developments in technology, the interaction with traditional skills, the training we are likely to require -and the attitudes we need to change to get there. Case studies will show how this has been put into practice elsewhere and point towards how we can apply this within our own working environment.*

The other Conference event we plan will be the GAG Exhibition. Last year we intended to combine this with a ‘Meet the Illustrator’ session where an exhibitor would do a short presentation on the work they had submitted. This didn’t work as a formal event, partly because this had to be organised at very short notice. For Cardiff we want this to work as follows:

### **‘Meet the Illustrator’**

*This event will consist of a series of short presentations and Q+A, given by invited members of the GAG exhibiting work in the conference exhibition during lunchtimes or breaks in the programme. This year, priority for exhibition space will be*

*given to those members prepared to talk about their work.*

*The aim is to promote discussion about graphics work between practitioners and their non-graphics colleagues. The presenters will outline the background to their piece of work or project and expound the methodology employed. The presentations will show how particular problems have been assessed, approached and resolved. They will also allow the participants to showcase pieces of research which would not fit into to a traditional conference discussion or seminar format.*

*Exhibitors will be required to write a short biographical piece about themselves and their work, as well as thumbnail images, which will be included in an ‘informal’ exhibition catalogue to be included in the Conference packs.*

*The presentations will focus on practical challenges and solutions, setting these practical aspects within their theoretical context and intellectual milieu. Graphics specialists do not spend enough time talking to other colleagues about their work and few users of graphics work necessarily take the time to talk to those who supply the work outside of a formal contractual relationship. This needs to change if we are to improve mutual understanding and respect which is essential for the future of the whole profession.*

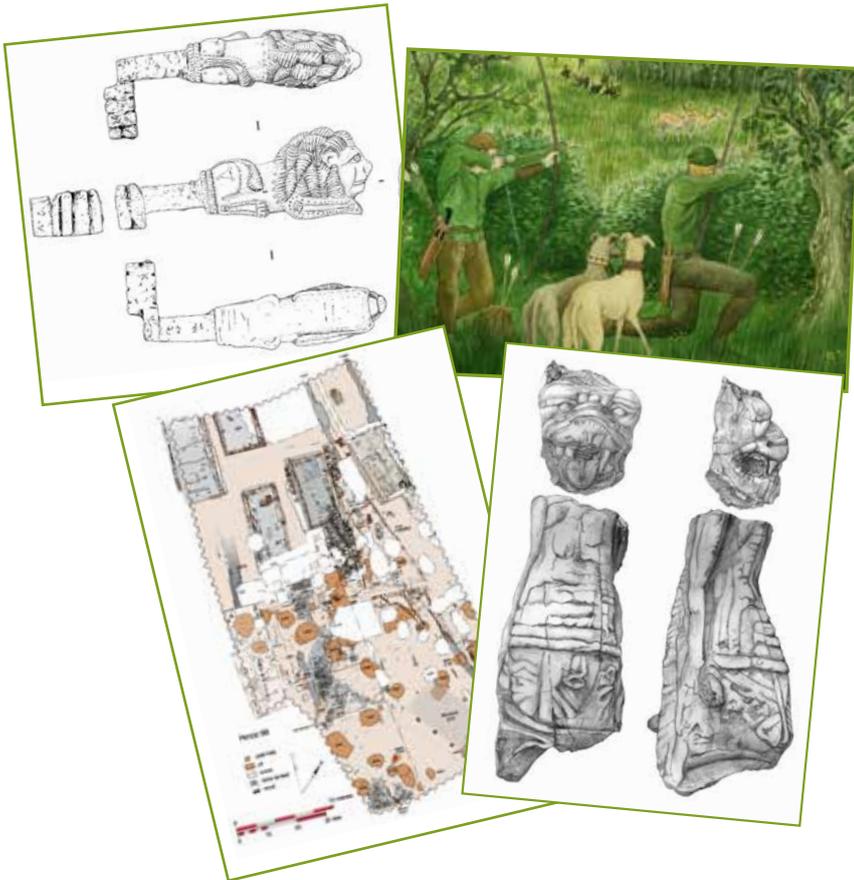
This is the plan. To make it work we need contributions from you. So please start thinking about this and get in touch- the sooner the better! Speakers who have agreed to take part so far include Drew Smith MCIfA and Mikko Kriek MCIfA of SmithKriek Productions, Garry Gibbons (ViA), Steve Malone MCIfA of Trent & Peak Archaeology and Sue Fielding of the Royal Commission (Wales).

Full details of the conference are available on the CIfA website here:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/conference/2015info>

We hope to see you there!

# GAG Exhibition



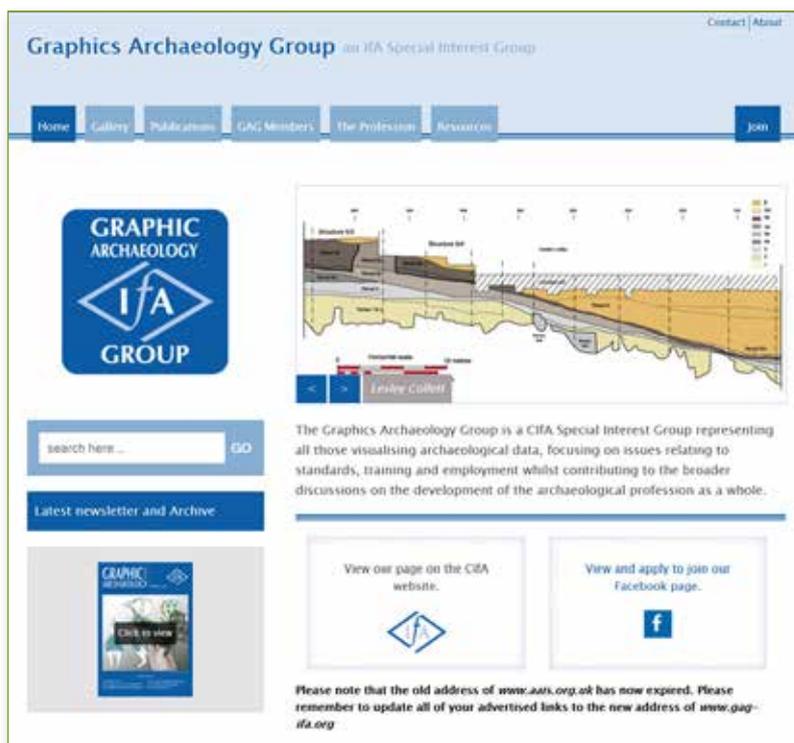
As mentioned above, the Cifa Conference will once again play host to the GAG exhibition, which we hope this year will be displayed on new exhibition boards which have been obtained for the purpose, to avoid the drudgery of hiring easels and lugging heavy frames around the country.

We are seeking not just more material for the exhibition, but people who are willing to come along to the Conference and talk about their work in short 'Meet the Illustrator' (or Surveyor/Photographer!) sessions.

Remember that all aspects of archaeological graphics are eligible; although reconstruction art tends to be heavily represented as people seem to think it is more 'suitable' for an exhibition we also want to see examples of artefact illustration, cartography, site plans, photography, survey work, GIS...

If you wish to submit work for the exhibition, please contact Drew Smith MCifa via the Group email [groups@archaeologists.net](mailto:groups@archaeologists.net). You will need to supply high-resolution images (300dpi) at either A3 or A4 size, plus a short biography and captions for your images.

# GAG Website and Gallery



Tom Small MCifa has been busy getting the new GAG website up and running – (and of course no sooner is it up than the Cifa is launched and all logos and colour palettes are out-of-date!)

Tom has promised to revise the site with new logos and branding as soon as possible.

Meanwhile a number of members have responded to the new Gallery and their work can currently be seen at <http://gag-ifa.org/index.php/category/gallery/>

If you are interested in displaying your own images within the gallery we would like to receive them, but you must be a MCifa grade member. Please email [contact@gag-cifa.org](mailto:contact@gag-cifa.org) with a note of interest and we will send you the requirements. You will then be invited to a link on Dropbox, where you may upload up to 12 gallery images and a text document about yourself.

# Validation Assessment Procedure

Archaeological Graphics practitioners applying for ClfA membership or upgrade are now able to apply to be assessed by their professional peers from the Graphic Archaeology Group whose recommendation passes to Validation Committee.

In the lead-up to the merger of the AAI&S and IfA in October 2012, a membership consultation process was undertaken. One of the features of the AAI&S which was consistently commented on by its membership as being important was the portfolio assessment for full accreditation. These assessments were conducted in person with a panel of peers both to assess and to give feedback on an individual's portfolio. It was designed to be constructive with a free discussion of methodologies forming a fundamental part of the process.

As specialist assessments have been integrated into the ClfA's validation process for Graphics and Cartography, the AAI&S system was adopted, largely intact, and is currently used with only minor modifications.

Although, to ensure quality, the system has to be robust, that does not mean it is overly formal. Currently there are two specialist validation Assessment Officers, Drew Smith and Liz Gardner. Drew is a former Chair of the AAI&S and a reconstructional artist. Liz is a former AAI&S Council member and a freelance commercial archaeological illustrator (cartographics and small finds). Both went through the validation process to become MAAIS and have continued their commitment to standards and governance as committee members of the GAG.

As mentioned above, the specialist assessment is the peer review element of the ClfA validation. Its purpose is to establish that candidates understand the working principles of what makes a good archaeological illustration. In practice, one of the assessment officers, together with one member of the ClfA's validation committee and one invited outside

specialist will chat with the candidate relatively informally about their portfolio and ask questions about it. Generally, it is more like a round table discussion than any kind of formal interview. As with any peer review process, new ideas and methodologies are always welcomed – as long as they can be backed up!

The assessment panel will meet to interview up to four applicants during the day and venues are chosen to enable easy access by public transport. The procedure should take approximately an hour and a half. On conclusion, the panel confers behind closed doors before inviting the candidate back in to offer feedback and advice. A recommendation is then sent to the main ClfA Validation committee, who will then make a final decision on the application and notify the candidate of the outcome. Applicants who achieve MCIfA status are eligible to upload samples of work onto the Graphic Archaeology Group area of the ClfA website.

***Drew Smith MCIfA & Elizabeth Gardner MCIfA***

Applications for ClfA membership or membership upgrades should be sent via the main ClfA office in Reading: applicants working in the field of archaeological graphics who wish to be assessed by portfolio in the manner described above must first fill in a ClfA application and apply in the normal way: see the website [www.archaeologists.net/join/individual](http://www.archaeologists.net/join/individual)

Further queries please email [membership@archaeologists.net](mailto:membership@archaeologists.net)

# New Member Profile

My name is Shelly Werner, my application for MCIfA was successful after an assessment interview in York on 14 June 2014. Having completed my undergraduate degree in 1998 at Cleveland State University, Ohio (USA) in Anthropology with a focus on Archaeology and Studio Art; I then moved to the UK and graduated from Edinburgh University with an MPhil in Archaeology in 2002 and a PhD in Geography (GIS)/ Archaeology in 2008. Throughout my PhD, I also worked part-time at the Royal Commission of Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS). I have worked in professional archaeology since 2004.

Following graduation I started working full-time with RCAHMS, holding various positions which has provided invaluable experience in archaeology throughout my career. I was able to develop my GIS and digitizing skills, focusing on excavation drawings and survey data of Roman sites in the Inveresk area and along the Antonine Wall. This gave me the opportunity to become familiar with excavation reports and data from various sources including commercial units, academic archaeological excavations and archived information. My work on sites along

the Antonine Wall assisted with the preparation of information for the supply of maps for the World Heritage Site nomination of the Antonine Wall.

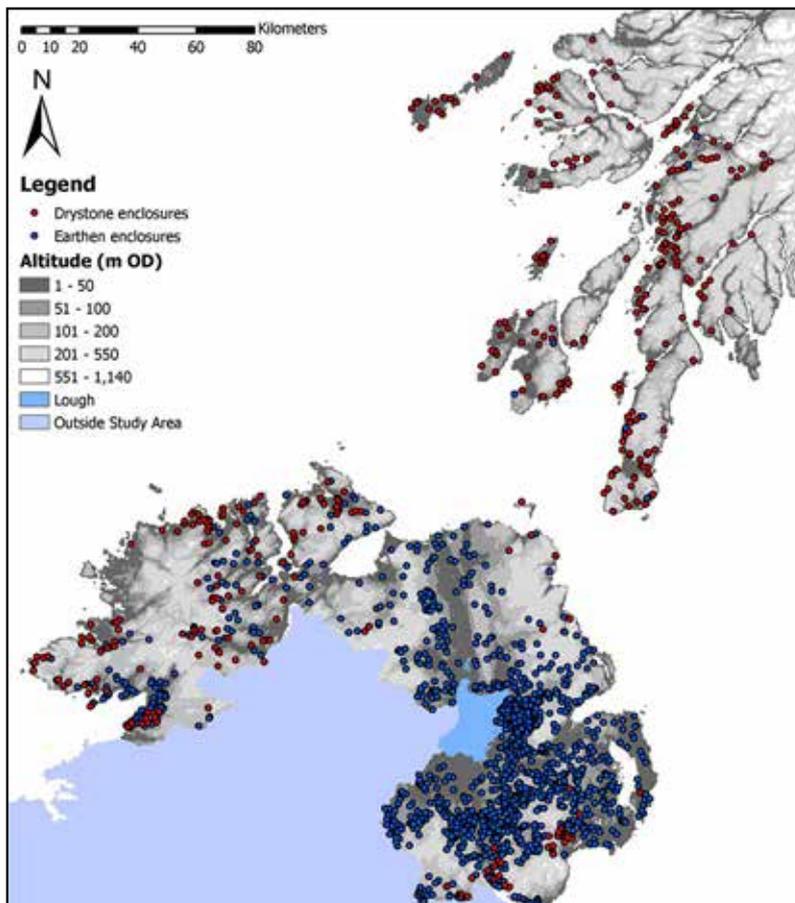
Whilst working as Historic Scotland Archive Cataloguer with the RCAHMS, I also gained valuable experience in cataloguing and archiving. This involved archiving terrestrial excavations and then latterly developing the newly created Maritime archive. This was a particularly challenging project as it required an insight into developing efficient methods for organizing and cataloguing maritime data for storage and public enquiry. One of the last projects I archived before the post ended was the Brown and White Caterthun excavations from CFA Archaeology Ltd. I enjoyed archiving these projects and going through the archive and seeing photos of several colleagues in their younger days!

On leaving the RCAHMS, I became self-employed, providing GIS services for the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. Primarily, I developed a GIS database for the purposes of querying and illustrating resources and archives of Scottish marine and maritime heritage for their Marine and Maritime panel of the Scottish Archaeological Research Framework (ScARF).

In July 2009 I began working for CFA Archaeology Ltd as a GIS specialist in their Graphics Department. This position has given me the opportunity to develop my GIS skills within the context of commercial archaeology consultancy. This position has allowed me both to work with established technologies and also explore and develop new techniques for analysing and displaying spatial data. I have also been able to develop my knowledge of field survey and GPS/GNSS equipment and dealing directly with raw survey data. I now work with raw survey data and excavation plans and sections all the way through to the final illustrations for grey literature and publications. It's also nice to go back to my artistic roots from my undergraduate days and use some of my creative ability outside of mapping and cartography.

The best thing about this job is that GIS is constantly evolving, so I am always learning, whether it be new techniques or software programs. At the moment I am working with LiDAR data and am really enjoying branching out into researching techniques for analysing and displaying 3-D data.

*Distribution of stone and earthen enclosures: a figure from my PhD*



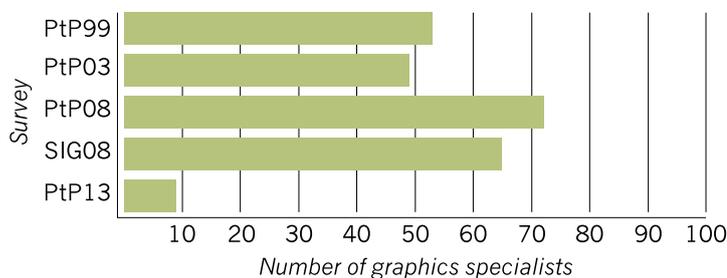
# There's been a global financial crisis – is anyone left out there?

Garry Gibbons

It's been estimated the number of people working in the archaeology sector contracted by almost a third for the period 2008–2013 (Aitchison & Rocks Macqueen 2013:10), marking an end to 30 years of progressive growth across the sector. This period of uninterrupted growth was also reflected in the number of graphics specialists working in the profession (Figure 1) as identified in the various *Profiling the Profession* surveys (Aitchison 1999; Aitchison & Edwards 2003; Aitchison & Edwards 2008; Aitchison & Rocks Macqueen 2013:10) and the *Special Interest Group Survey for Illustrators & Surveyors* (Hodgson 2008) – in sharp contrast, the apparent effects of the economic downturn are also dramatically recorded. That said, recording the number of graphics staff sufficiently motivated to respond to a survey will not provide an answer to what is a fundamental question: *How many specialist graphics staff are employed in the archaeology and heritage sector?* The importance of the answer may be lost in the simplicity of the question. If the harvesting of data by survey is designed to provide sector intelligence to strategically better understand the profession, especially in terms of effective training provision, (Aitchison & Rocks Macqueen 2013:18) or act to inform changes in working practice, conditions, etc (Hodgson 2008:4), then accuracy and confidence in a data set is essential.

## Specialist-centred survey

Much has changed over the past 20 years or so, not least the concept of 'archaeologist' from one simply defining itself in-the-field to a recognition that archaeology is a process comprising an array of specialist activities. (Aitchison 2011). The ClfA's establishment of various special interest groups provides a structure in which focussed surveys of specialist practitioners can be undertaken which, when taken together, will provide a fine-grained audit of the archaeology sector. A model for this approach was carried out over 2009–10 as an element of the wide-ranging *Visualisation in Archaeology* project. A series of snapshot (Figure 2) and interview surveys were carried out among employed specialist graphics practitioners across England, the results of which have substantially contributed to an ongoing body of research. The strength of a special-



ist-centred approach to sector intelligence lies in its manageability – an ability to accurately identify discrete groups, to directly interact with individual specialists, and thereby ensure a much greater degree of participation in the resulting survey.

Figure 1: Recorded number of graphics specialists, *Profiling the Profession* 1999–2013 and *Special Interest Group Survey* 2008

## 2010 VIA Snapshot Survey

A telephone survey of some 500 England-based archaeology and heritage organisations identified 41 organisations with in-house graphics departments employing one or more full-/part-time specialist graphics staff -- the total number of employed graphics specialists totalled some 100 professionals across England. Of the 41 organisations with in-house graphics departments, 33 of these (employing 80% of specialist staff in England) completed and returned the snapshot survey. Answering the question – *How many specialist graphics staff are employed in the archaeology and heritage sector?* – is important: It provides a baseline measure against which future sector fluctuations can be measured; it provides a dataset that can be interpreted and reported on with a high degree of confidence; it provides the



Figure 2: 2010 VIA Snapshot Survey

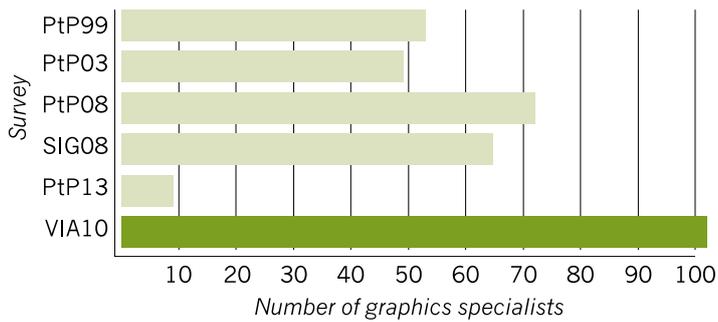


Figure 3: Recorded number of graphics specialists, 2010 VIA Snapshot Survey

sector's professional representative body and its special interest groups a nuanced picture of conditions at play across the sector. Figure 3 compares these results to previous surveys and whilst greater numbers of specialist graphics staff have been identified, it must be noted the *Profiling the Profession* surveys collated data from across the UK, whilst the *Special Interest Group* survey collected data from AAI&S members across the UK and Europe. Further, the PtP and SIG surveys included results from both employed and self employed practitioners. In contrast, the *Visualisation in Archaeology* survey was from the outset targeted toward employed graphics specialists across England, consequently the VIA survey points towards a much larger cohort of employed and self-employed specialist graphics practitioners operating across the UK than previous results have indicated.

### Representation of specialists

Identifying the scale of graphics specialists operating across the sector has an obvious impact on professional representative bodies, not least in terms of recruitment. In 2010 fewer than 20% of employed specialist graphics staff in England were members of the IfA and just over a quarter were members of the Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors

– over half of all employed specialist graphics staff in England chose not to be represented by a professional body. Finally, at a time when CPD is now compulsory among ClfA members, it may be useful to record that in 2010 almost 75% of specialist graphics staff stated their organisations did not provide formalised CPD pathways. Doubtless the situation has changed in many respects over the past five years. The economic downturn has impacted on the scale and composition of the profession, as one senior English Heritage employee claimed at the 2012 IfA Conference, graphics specialists operating in the sector have radically declined in numbers. Over this challenging period the ClfA has worked hard to raise the profile of CPD among its membership – merging the AAI&S with the ClfA has hopefully seen an increase in professional representation and, therefore, a greater uptake in training opportunities.

### Surviving the crisis...

The VIA 2010 survey uniquely captured detailed intelligence from an exceptionally varied range of graphics specialists, just before a reported major contraction in their numbers due to the effects of the global financial crisis – so who is now left out there? In April 2015 the VIA survey will be repeated. Between now and then contact will be made with organisations to establish which in-house graphics teams have survived the downturn and to discover if new organisations employing graphics specialists have begun to flourish.

For more information on the forthcoming 2015 survey or to receive a copy of the *2010 VIA Snapshot Survey Summary Report*, contact: Garry Gibbons, PhD candidate, University of Southampton  
Email: gg1a06@soton.ac.uk

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# Small Finds goes to the Small Isles

## Tom Small's experience of illustrating Canna's recently discovered Prayer Stone

The recent discovery of a prayer stone, a round, 'loaf-shaped' stone with a scored cross upon its upper face, has generated a great deal of interest within academic circles, but also amongst the wider public. It was found on the Inner Hebridean island of Canna, owned by the National Trust for Scotland (NTS), and its particular significance lies in the fact that it forms the upper part of a matching pair of stones – apparently the first matching pair to be found in Scotland, though several are known to exist in Ireland. Here I discuss my experience of visiting the island during June 2012 to record the prayer stone and its matching 'bullaun' stone, and an additional 'hollow' stone which it is thought would have been used for the Christian ritual of washing feet. The flavour of this account is more travelogue than technical guide.

Having driven to the port of Mallaig on the west coast of Scotland, it is approximately a three hour ferry journey to Canna during which I absorb literature about the island whilst tourists rush out to see the site of dolphins playing in the surf beside the ship. Inevitably, most tourists disembark at the larger island of Rhum. This leaves so few people continuing the journey to Canna that Stuart Connor, the island's property manager travelling on the same ferry, is able to identify me as being the illustrator scheduled to arrive that day.

Canna – an island only 7km long and 1.5km wide – is run as a historic and natural conservation area by the National Trust for Scotland, and it appears that most of the fourteen or so inhabitants of the island are employed by the Trust in some capacity. Canna's day-to-day life revolves around farming and the steady stream of tourists that make the effort to visit the island, either by ferry or by private sailing ship where they can moor in the natural bay between Canna and Sanday (Illus.1).

Being such a small island everybody is aware of my visit, and apparently knows who I am before I even introduce myself. I am made to feel welcome with smiles and enthusiasm for my work ahead – these are people who hold their island and its heritage close to their hearts and it dawns on me that I am not



simply fulfilling an illustration commission, but that I am in the privileged position of participating in their island story.

After a brief Land-rover ride I am shown my accommodation for the weekend, a mobile home with fitted gas and electricity. After settling in, I am soon driven to where the prayer stone was discovered, and we recover it from its hiding place: the level of public interest has actually taken the NTS by surprise and it is deemed necessary not to have the stone on public display, (Illus.2).





From there we proceed a couple of hundred metres inland to where the other stones for illustration reside beneath the early Celtic cross which itself sits within a natural amphitheatre, (Illus.3). I take in the cross, still beautifully decorated after several centuries with images from Christ's birth and Pictish animals demonstrating the overlap and overlaying of beliefs that Columba or his disciples prompted when they Christianised these islands. This cross and its decoration have previously been drawn in 1996 by the able hand of Ian Scott of the Royal Commission. I unpack my tool-kit and proceed to string a section line across one of the stones taking copious photographs and sketched measurements as I go, conscious of the fact that once I am away from the island I will be working purely from my records (Illus. 4).

Placing the prayer stone in the lower bullaun stone makes for a perfect fit, and there is a sensation of snapping a missing piece of a jigsaw into place to form a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. To have been the first person to do this in several hundred years must have been a remarkable feeling (Illus.5).



The prayer stone is in fact small enough to carry to the caravan where I can record it in relative comfort. Aware of how easy it might be to get the axes of the roughly symmetrical stone mixed up I proceed carefully. (Illus. 6).



Having completed the prayer stone, I proceed to tackle the larger stones beneath the cross. The walk between the cross and the caravan takes me through the bluebell woods where the grave of the island's former owner, John Lorne Campbell, resides. I scatter what seems

like a dozen rabbits that pound into the undergrowth: they are an ubiquitous problem on Canna eroding the hillsides and monuments, and a cull is planned which will reduce their numbers to a manageable amount. Apparently, Campbell was not keen on any invasive archaeology being conducted upon the island – which is why comparatively little has been done up until now. Treading softly past his grave I hope that he would be glad at least to see the stones being recorded for posterity's sake.

I make steady progress; the day has been grey and overcast and towards late afternoon the wind picks up and it starts to spatter rain. I pull up my hood and hunker down inside my rain jacket, feeling comparatively cosy as the wind begins to pick up. I persevere for about another hour before the weather saps my enthusiasm, and I retreat to the caravan. Part of me would like to check out Canna's restaurant, but I know my time is more wisely spent making sure my records are accurate.

The island has no mobile phone or radio reception and so I continue to work in a well-established tradition of solitude: the draw of these islands to early Christian monks was presumably their remoteness that would have allowed for quiet contemplation.

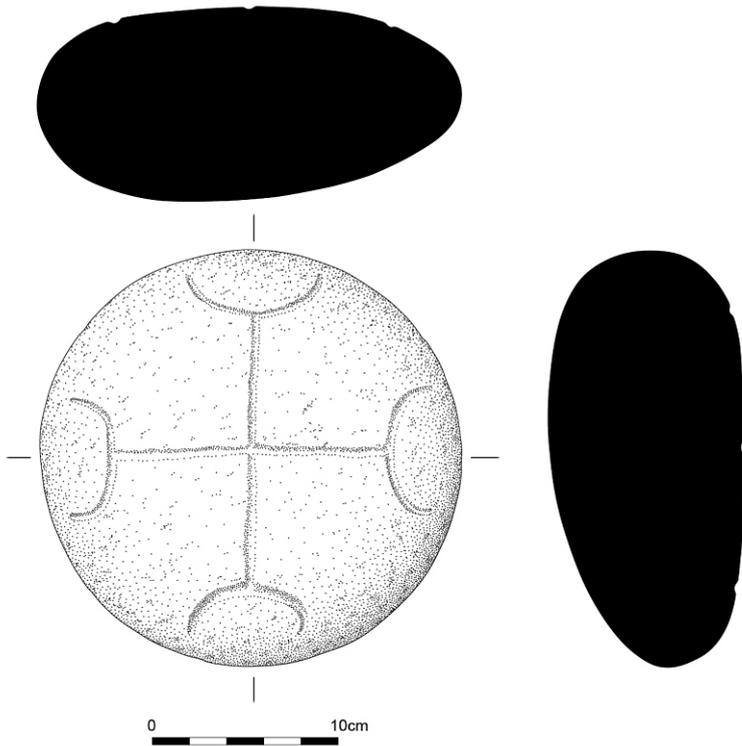
The following evening I am keen to see if I can get some photos of the stones with a raking light, and with this in mind I borrow one of the powerful torches from the harbour staff. We are near the summer solstice and even at midnight this far north there is still a grey light



*Kate Mavor, the Chief Executive for the National Trust for Scotland, poses for a photograph with the prayer stone beside the cross*

by which I can easily read the hands of my watch. Even so, the experience of venturing into the night-time landscape is slightly eerie. The artificial light from the torch does stand out even in the half-light but the final results are mixed; there is slightly too much shadow cast across the stones and much of the finer detail is lost (Illus. 7).

The following day is a Sunday and having spotted a small chapel dedicated to Columba I half expect to be serenaded by the sound of hymns as I continue my recording. In contrast to the Saturday, Sunday lives up to its name and there is a gorgeous sun-filled day with perpetual blue skies. Stripping down to a T-shirt I pause to observe how just amazing a day it is. So instead of hymns I am serenaded by various birdsong, including swifts, an eagle and a corncrake that lurks nearby but never reveals itself. Partway through the day, I am visited by Stuart Connor who is giving Kate Mavor, the chief executive for the National Trust for Scotland, a tour of the island, (Illus. 8). I discuss my work and Stuart insists that Kate poses for a photograph with the prayer stone beside the cross. Given the favourable conditions I make good progress and later in the evening as the sun sets I take some photographs of the mountains upon Rhum steeped in a terracotta red from the sun's rays.



The Monday morning provides perfect raking light and I am kept busy supplementing my records with yet more photographs. By now, after a weekend of fairly intense recording – not to mention the physical exertion involved in hefting the stones around which must weigh up to 50–60kgs and take some effort to shift into a position appropriate for recording – I am quite fatigued. I have not had time to see much of the island beyond the natural harbour, but manage to make time for a short tour of Canna House, once the home of the island’s owners, the Campbells. The house is still steeped in their lives and interests which covered music, ethnography and photography amongst others. Following this, it is a short wait on a sun-lit pier for the afternoon ferry to the mainland. Once aboard, I converse with one of the island tourists who I had met earlier on the island and we exchange our views on Canna – it turns out that of all the islands she has visited Canna, for her, is the most impressive. Canna gradually recedes, the skies grey over, and as we reach the mainland I ready myself for the drive back to Edinburgh.

Back in Edinburgh I spend around 7 – 10 days compiling my records and drawing up a final product for submission; including stippled illustration with accompanying profiles and a set of reconstruction drawings showing how a worshipper might have interacted with the stones (left).

I found the experience of visiting Canna and drawing the worked stones very rewarding, both on a personal and a professional level, and hope that similar opportunities await me in the future.

With thanks to the National Trust for Scotland

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*Left, top to bottom: the Prayer Stone;*

*Reconstruction of the Prayer Stone rotated in the lower bullaun stone;*

*Reconstruction of the Washing Stone*

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Thank you for reading...  
**Next Newsletter due late May 2015**  
 Please submit contributions to us via  
[groups@archaeologists.net](mailto:groups@archaeologists.net)  
 using the subject line ‘GAG News’, by 15 May