

Member news

Obituary



Hal Dalwood MCIfA (336)

Hal Dalwood, who died of cancer on 25 November 2015 at the age of 58, first became interested in archaeology during his childhood and went on to study under Professor Colin Renfrew and Clive Gamble at Southampton University in the 1970s. After graduating, Hal spent a year in Sudan teaching English before joining the archaeological digging circuit, working on excavations around the country, including Hazleton North, Beckford, Poundbury, Great Missenden, St Albans, and Shetland. In the mid-1980s he spent several years in Aylesbury working for Buckinghamshire County Museum, excavating and publishing a range of sites and leading the Museum's

Hal was completely engaged in the world of professional archaeology: teaching, attending and speaking at conferences, and writing popular and academic publications.

Credit: Rachel Edwards

Manpower Services Commission-funded team on the *Aylesbury past project*. During this time he was an active member of both CND and Archaeologists for Peace, as well as becoming a prime mover in the formation of the pressure group Archaeologists Communicate Transform (ACT).

In 1988 he moved to Worcester to work on Deansway, a major urban excavation located within the medieval and Roman town. Hal was instrumental in the delivery of this project, bringing it to publication as a highly regarded CBA monograph. He worked for Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service for the next 25 years before taking voluntary redundancy in 2013. During this period, he was responsible for the completion of numerous projects across the West Midlands, the most notable of which was his role in developing and leading the *Central Marches historic towns survey*. This was the first extensive urban survey to be funded by English Heritage and covered 64 small towns in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. This project aimed to

strengthen development control within small towns and it had, and continues to have, a significant effect on the management of the historic environment in all three counties. The last major project Hal was involved with was the excavation of an area of Worcester's Roman suburbs and Civil War defences prior to construction of The Hive, which houses a unique combination of public and university libraries and the county archive and archaeology service. Throughout his career Hal provided invaluable advice to his colleagues, supporting them with his extensive knowledge, particularly in the field of medieval urban archaeology. Hal also had a strong sense of social justice, and was an active UNISON member and steward.

Hal married Rachel Edwards, also a member of CfA, in 1993. They worked as colleagues for much of the time, and had over 25 happy years together. Hal was a brilliant and inspiring team leader, worker and friend, and a great believer in developing younger archaeologists and supporting friends and colleagues. He had a passion for communicating the subject to everyone, be they other archaeologists, students, amateur archaeologists, members of the public, or family members old and young. He was completely engaged in the world of professional archaeology: teaching, attending and speaking at conferences, and writing popular and academic publications, the last of which, on Anglo-Saxon towns, will be published in 2016. He was a stalwart supporter of what has become the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, from its origin in 1982.

Hal was an incredibly supportive, loving, engaging and fun person; he had an extraordinary encyclopaedic mind for archaeology, history and the ancient world, built around a personal library that would put many institutions to shame, but he was equally interested and informed about politics and current affairs. For many of us, our memories of him will be inextricably linked with his great depth of knowledge and many animated debates that extended long into the evening and night over a few drinks.

This expands on the obituary published in The Guardian online on 15 December 2015. Text by Dexter Dalwood, Rachel Edwards, Victoria Bryant, Robin Jackson and Duncan Brown.