

it, which is what he has done, but without further comment or expansion, which I believe to be the correct approach, given the size of the book and its scope. The reader who knows nothing of the subject will find here enough to inform and guide their visits and specialists will still find something of interest as well, I'm sure.

The remainder of the book comprises a guide to 25 sites in France, 13 in Spain and 2 in England, starting, as is only fitting, with Church Hole and Robin Hood's Cave in the limestone valley of Creswell Crags in Nottinghamshire. Here, in 2003, Paul Bahn, Paul Pettitt and Sergio Ripoll made the first discovery of cave art in Britain. Alistair Pike, who subsequently became a UBSS member, was involved in the dating work, which was able to prove that some of the figures were at least 12,000 years old. Bahn gives a estimate of between 20 and thirty definite or probable figures, for Church Hole. There is an excellently clear photograph of one of the Church Hole figures, here described as a bison. To me, this also serves as an illustration that there is by no means universal agreement on the interpretation. I have commented that in my view, this figure more closely resembles an auroch, particularly in the placement of the horns, the shape of the head and the line of the back. I have heard this view from several others in this field. However, as the photograph is clear and well-presented, it enables the reader to make their own comparisons and draw their own conclusions. They can also visit the site and see the original.

The guide provides comprehensive information for each site. Address, contact details, nearest city/town, nearest airport, nearest car rental, nearest train station, nearest bus route, nearest taxi or private car hire, restaurants in the vicinity and hotels in the vicinity. Bahn then presents further information about the site itself: opening times, admissions prices, storage facilities, whether a group has to be of a sufficient size for the cave to open, whether reservations can be made, the language of the tour, length of tour, whether toilets, café's and WC facilities are available, distances to be walked, level of fitness needed equipment required, conditions inside the cave and whether photography is allowed (mostly not). It is difficult to think of anything a visitor might need to know which is not presented here, clearly, concisely and accurately. Naturally, details will change over time, but hopefully the book will prove sufficiently popular to allow for the appearance of later editions with reasonable regularity.

This excellent guide is a long overdue addition to the bookshelf (and pocket) of anyone with an interest in this fascinating subject and will finally stop me having to cobble together information from a wide variety of sources for the various UBSS members who regularly ask for help when planning trips of this nature. In itself, this proves that the book does indeed fill a niche!

Linda Wilson

*Mammoths: Giants of the Ice Age.* by Adrian Lister and Paul Bahn. 2007. Frances Lincoln Ltd. London. HB 192 pp. Price £19.99 ISBN 978 0 7112 2801 6.

This is a revised and updated edition of a book first published in 1994. It includes much new information from research and new finds at sites across the northern hemisphere. The book is divided into five sections: *origins*, *mammoths unearthed*, *the natural history of mammoths*, *mammoths and human culture* and *extinction*. Each section gives a succinct overview of that part of the mammoth story.

The first section tells the story of the evolution of the mammoth and sets the scene for the second, which gives an overview of the evidence that we have from excavation and other finds of mammoth remains. More is known about this particular creature than about almost any

other extinct prehistoric animal; most are known only from fossilised bones and teeth but significant numbers of mammoths have been preserved, frozen in the far north and dried, mummified, in caves elsewhere. In addition there are the several hundred depictions of mammoths made by our Palaeolithic ancestors on the walls of caves and other works of art. Combining these sources of information with deductions made from modern elephants has allowed the authors to arrive at an unusually complete understanding of the “natural history” of the mammoth, described in the third section of the book.

From the point of view of this reviewer, the most interesting section of the book is that which discusses the mammoth’s place in human culture as I have been fortunate enough to see the vast majority of mammoth depictions made by Palaeolithic artists in French caves. These vary from remarkably detailed anatomically correct engravings in caves such as Rouffignac to the highly stylized painting in La Baume Latrone. One of the most remarkable that they illustrate is the elongated mammoth engraved on the tip of a mammoth tusk found at Berelekh in Eastern Siberia. Similar “hoop shaped” engravings have also been found in the cave of Jovelle, in the Dordogne and, possibly, also in the Grotte de la Grèze.

The final section of the book discusses the various theories surrounding the extinction of the mammoth. Rightly, the authors do not espouse any simple story to explain this but conclude that it was a complex process affected by multiple factors, though climate change and hunting by man are undoubtedly amongst the most important.

The book is well-presented with numerous excellent photographs, drawings and diagrams and will no doubt appeal to younger readers as well, although it is certainly not a book aimed at children. It concludes with a glossary and an appendix describing the various processes used to interpret the evidence. The inclusion of these parts indicates that this is not really a book for the specialist, but the general reader will undoubtedly learn much about these marvelous animals.

Graham Mullan