

MUSEUM REPORT 2009

It has been another busy year for the Museum. We have again opened our doors on to students from the Archaeology Department who needed access to the material on display for a project to choose and object, draw it and research its history and this year, the bone combs from Little Solsbury featured in one of the posters which resulted from this exercise.

I have dealt with numerous enquires on a very diverse range of subjects ranging from the Sun Hole bear bones to the Kingsweston flints. I also had someone seeking information about E. K. Tratman who turned up via his brother in someone's genealogy research.

Much of my work this year has involved me in searching through the catalogues to discover what material we do hold to enable me to answer enquiries. A good example of this comes from a Somerset County Council project to cross-reference the archaeological excavations, evaluations and watching briefs which are recorded on the Somerset Historic Environment Record database, with their museum archive accession references. I received a request firstly for Brean Down material and then for the results of various investigations at Charterhouse-on-Mendip and the accession references of the material. The only feasible way to deal with requests like this is to make the catalogues available via our website so I have started a project to scan all our catalogues and put PDF images on the website.

Work on this project has progressed rapidly. One of the Mendip catalogues containing Brean Down Roman Temple, Charterhouse and various other sites is now available, and I anticipate that by the end of April all the catalogues will be available on our website. This will certainly make the job of dealing with such enquiries much easier and quicker and is also a good demonstration of our commitment to public access.

I have been actively involved with the University's Curator's Group which meets approximately three times a year. As most of you know, 2009 is an important year for the University, being its Centenary Year. As part of the Centenary Weekend in July, our Museum will be open on the Friday evening and again on Saturday morning and late afternoon. This is being advertised through the university and bookings have already been made. The Curator's Group is assisting with what has been named a Cabinet of Curiosities, which will be available on the Centenary Website. This will feature four items from each of the collections, with photographs and 100 words of text. The ammonites from Aveline's Hole and the perforated shell from the shell necklace will feature here, and two items remain to be chosen.

Work inside the Museum has been hampered by the fact that we lost access to the Stables for nearly four months as a result of the building works and the need to install the new door. However, now that access has been restored I can begin work on a new display in readiness for the Centenary Weekend, which will also feature the material from Aveline's Hole.

I also responded on behalf of UBSS to the National Trust Consultation on the proposed reburial of the human remains from Avebury.

Linda Wilson, Museum Curator