

THE GREATER MANCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT ANNUAL REPORTS, 1983-4 and 1984-5

P Mayes

INTRODUCTION

At its meeting of 26 April 1984 the Management Committee of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit agreed that the Director's annual report to the committee, previously printed separately, should in future be included in a new annual journal to be published by the GMAU. This journal, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Journal, would also include reports by local societies and individuals on the archaeology and history of the county.

The published Director's report would summarise detailed papers presented to the committee at its annual meeting, and would include a financial statement prepared by the Director of Finance of the University of Manchester showing income and expenditure for the year. The Unit's financial year runs from 1 September to 31 August. Practical considerations prevented the production of a volume in 1984 and this first volume therefore contains reports for the years 1983-4 and 1984-5.



Plate 1 Excavations in medieval Stockport

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GREATER MANCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Management Committee 1 Constitution

The Committee to be set up initially for a period of three years, expiring in May 1983. Representatives to be appointed for a period of twelve months to coincide with the municipal year. The Committee to consist of four representatives each from the City of Manchester, the Greater Manchester Council and the University of Manchester, with secretarial services provided by the University. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman to be appointed for a one-year term of office coinciding with the municipal year, to rotate annually between City and County representatives.

2 Functions

To approve an overall policy of work to be carried out by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit; to approve annual estimates for work to be carried out by the Unit; to consider, as necessary, any issues connected with the carrying-out of projects by the Unit or the financing of such projects; to advise the constituent authorities on Unit staff requirements.

Steering Committee

1 Constitution

The City Planning Officer
The County Planning Officer
The County Arts Officer
The Professor, Department of Archaeology,
Manchester University
The Director, Manchester Museum
The Director of the Greater Manchester
Archaeological Unit

2 Functions

To consider and report to the Management Committee on the selection and financing of projects to be carried out by the Unit, and on programmes of work, annual estimates and staff appointments.

THE GREATER MANCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT ANNUAL REPORT, 1983-4

Management Committee 1983-4

Chairman	Cllr B P Murphy (County)
Vice-Chairman	Cllr D G Ford (City)
Secretary	The Registrar, University of Manchester
Representing Manchester City Council	Cllr Mrs Y I Emery, JP Cllr K B Lim Cllr P M Morrison
Representing GMC	Cllr H Davies Cllr Mrs J O Howcroft Cllr G Morgan
Department of Archaeology	Prof G D B Jones Prof A R Birley
University of Manchester	Mr A Warhurst
Manchester Museum	Dr A J N W Prag

Steering Committee

Chairman	Mrs J Taylor
Secretary	Mr C E Makepeace
Manchester City Planning Department	Mr H Blachnicki
GMC Planning Department	Mr R Maund Mr A Pass
Director GMAU	Mr P Mayes
Department of Archaeology	Prof G D B Jones
University of Manchester	Mr A Warhurst
Manchester Museum	Dr A J N W Prag

Director's Report 1983-4

The past year has been a period of consolidation and growth. The scale and range of Unit activities is now reaching the point where it can influence the public's awareness and perception of the past. Major conservation and survey projects will ensure that the enjoyment of the county's heritage will be both heightened and enhanced.

Towards the end of the year, staff were appointed to two major new projects, at Castlefield and Castleshaw. The Castlefield project is concerned with a wide range of activities in the Urban Heritage Park, and particular emphasis has been laid on the educational contribution made by project staff. A programme of excavation, survey, conservation and publication covers all periods from the Roman to the industrial revolution. We welcome the positive support of Manchester City Council for this project, and wish to express particular thanks

to members and officers of the Planning Committee.

A major programme of activities is planned at the Roman fort at Castleshaw, where past excavations have disturbed the site to such an extent that the earthworks of the fort and fortlet are scarcely distinguishable from later spoil heaps. Oldham Borough Community Programme Agency provided a work-force of 20 during the summer, to complement the activities of the Unit's own project team.

Both projects are expected to continue for several years. They are now led by qualified, experienced managers, who can remain in post until the conclusion of the work. This continuity is of great value to a Unit with a very small core staff, and gives a clear indication of the framework within which future projects should be considered.

A joint working party has been established in Stockport to agree and monitor a programme of excavation, survey and research into 'pre-industrial' Stockport. Unit staff supervise the activities of a small workforce provided by the Stockport Borough Community Programme Agency. The Manpower Services Commission's support for work on Roman Wigan has continued, and the local authority not only gave generous financial support to the work but also made available a key area within their own development programme on the Wiend.

Our application for renewal of the Post-Excavation Project was successful. Based at the University, its wide-ranging remit includes publication, dis-



Plate 2 Medieval Manchester, an exhibition at Castlefield Visitors' Centre

play and work on the Unit's Sites and Monuments Record. Agreement has also been reached for the appointment of a manager for the scheme.

Prompted by the publication of the joint West Yorkshire/GMC survey, *Mills in the 80's*, the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments has shown a strong interest in part-funding a three-year post in the Unit to survey the textile mills of the county. GMC has agreed grant-aid to fund half the post and RCHM's agreement is anticipated.

The Unit's relationship with voluntary groups has been maintained and enlarged. The newly-instituted 'Archaeology Fair', our continuing association with the Federation for Greater Manchester Archaeology, and the first opportunity for groups and individuals to publish in a county archaeological journal, will ensure the progressive strengthening of this relationship. The Unit's first major publication, Medieval Manchester, was published during the year.

Unit staff have received unswerving and influential support from the Management and Steering Committees. GMC, the Unit's main source of core-funding, made increased grants available for the year and gave further supplementary funds. The City of Manchester gave general financial support to the Unit and a specific grant towards the Castlefield Project. The NWWA, Oldham MBC, Wigan MBC and Stockport MBC all made generous contributions in cash and kind.

Archaeology is frequently a labour-intensive occupation, and the expansion and diversification of the Unit's activities has undoubtedly been made possible by the Manpower Services Commission. The

Area Board and its officers have recognised the community value of the Unit's projects, and have given them their support. We gratefully acknowledge this essential contribution and, moreover, welcome the opportunity of sharing our work throughout the county with temporary staff on year-long appointments.

The University of Manchester houses the Unit, provides administrative and financial services, and is the formal employer of the Unit's core staff. In every respect the organisation, exemplified by its staff, is generous, sympathetic and supportive: it offers a stimulating environment within which the embryonic Unit can mature and prosper.

The increased scale and intensity of our activities has been accomplished with no increase in the number of core staff, although the Unit's temporary staff has expanded five-fold during the past year.

I must express my sincere, personal thanks to John Walker, Adrian Tindall, and to our indefatigable secretary, Jasmin Vaccari. Without their commitment, enthusiasm and sheer hard work I would be unable to report on a year of solid accomplishment.

Financial Statement 1983-4

Project	Funding Body	Value (£)	Start	Notes
GMAU - Staff and other costs	GMC	44,000.	1983 September	All completed.
GMAU - Staff and other costs	City	2,600.	1983 September	
Chetham's	GMC	200.	1983 August	
Transit Van	GMC	5,000.	1983 December	
Aerial Photography	DOE	624.	1983 April	
GMAU - Post Excavation Proj.	MSC	87,648.	1983 August	
Gail House, Castlefield	MSC	44,172.	1983 December	
Wigan - Staff costs and Accommodation	DOE	2,094.	1984 February	
Wigan Rescue Excavation & Heritage Project	MSC	38,643.	1984 February	
Wigan - Site Accommodation & Transport	Wigan MBC	1,000.	1984 February	
Castlefield Urban Heritage Park Project	MSC	155,643.	1984 August	

THE GREATER MANCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT ANNUAL REPORT, 1984-5

Management Committee 1984-5

Chairman	Cllr A J Spencer (City)
Vice-Chairman	Cllr B P Murphy (County)
Secretary	The Registrar, University of Manchester
Representing Manchester City Council	Cllr P M Morrison Cllr K A Whitmore Cllr J Broderick
Representing GMC	Cllr H Davies Cllr G Morgan Cllr Mrs J D Howcroft
Department of Archaeology	Prof G D B Jones Prof A R Birley
University of Manchester	Mr A Warhurst
Manchester Museum	Dr A J N W Prag
Steering Committee	
Chairman	Mrs J Taylor
Secretary	Mr C E Makepeace
Manchester City Planning Department	Mr H Blachnicki
GMC Planning Department	Mr P Webster
Director GMAU	Mr P Mayes
Department of Archaeology	Prof G D B Jones
University of Manchester	Mr A Warhurst
Manchester Museum	Dr A J N W Prag



Plate 3 The work of the Unit on view in Bolton

Director's Report 1984-5

It is a pleasure to report on a year of sustained growth and development. Long-term plans have matured, and two major projects have successfully entered their second year. The increased level of activity within the Unit is only made possible by our ability to employ a considerable number of temporary staff. The goodwill extended to us by the organisations with which we are associated is singularly encouraging. They include the members and officers of GMC and the metropolitan districts, the board and officers of the Manpower Services Commission, including their staff at PFR and at Job Centres, the administrative staff of the University, the officers of NALGO and ASTMS, the North West Water Authority, HBMC and RCHME. All have responded with enthusiasm to the challenge presented by the archaeology of one of the country's most physically-intractable areas: a population of 2.5 million in an area of 497 square miles. We particularly welcome the support of the local archaeological and historical societies, who have continued strong programmes of excavation, survey and research.

The first year's activities at Castleshaw have been concerned with investigation of the defences of the inner fortlet. The position of ramparts and ditches obscured by spoil-dumps has been defined, and the conservation programme has begun. Ramparts and ditches will be remodelled in shallow profile before re-grassing, and negotiations have already begun for a modest improvement in public access to the site.

During the past year the Unit's Post-Excavation team has increasingly developed its expertise in design and display, and has successfully launched the mobile exhibition van in a wide range of public venues. The van and its tow vehicle, purchased with grant-aid from GMC, have enabled us to take the past to the public, and to heighten its awareness of the county's rich heritage. The team has also produced the Unit's second major volume, The Country Houses of Greater Manchester.

The Stockport Project successfully established the existence of medieval occupation-levels within the town centre. A start has been made on a publication on pre-industrial Stockport, and a comprehensive survey of one of the town's important timber-framed buildings has been completed. A small team is currently surveying the Etherow/Goyt Valley.

Excavations in Wigan were temporarily halted, and in consequence no further progress was made during the latter half of the year in elucidating the town's Roman and medieval past. A grant from Wigan Borough has financed the construction of a full-scale replica Iron Age hut and compound, for educational and recreational use, at Haigh Hall.

The Castlefield Project, now in its second year, has begun an important excavation on the Duke Street site. The area has proved to be deeply stratified, and the full sequence of superimposed forts survive. Enigmatic traces of what may prove to be pre-Roman occupation survive beneath the earliest ramparts. The project provides guided tours of the excavations and thematic tours of the



Plate 4 Clayton Hall, an illustration from a Unit publication

Urban Heritage Park. As a result, the attractions of the park have been much enhanced.

The joint GMC/RCHM post of Survey Assistant (Mills) has been agreed. The survey began in May and will last for three years. It is monitored by a working party of staff drawn from GMC, RCHM, the University and the Unit.

The large areas of mossland in the county represent an untapped source of information on its pre-history. GMC has generously agreed to act as the industrial sponsor of a joint application by GMAU and the University Department of Geography for a postgraduate award to study this important topic.

The Unit has continued its informal loan service to schools in the county, and plans are being considered for an expansion of this very important aspect of our work. Illustrative material from exhibitions mounted by the Unit in the Castlefield Visitors' Centre are recycled through the exhibi-

tion van, and thence into schools.

During the year John Walker, the Unit's Deputy Director, visited Hungary on a study-tour sponsored by the British Council. He continues as Secretary of the Federation for Greater Manchester Archaeology. The Unit's Field Officer, Adrian Tindall, has been appointed Secretary of the Council for British Archaeology, Group 5.

Media interest in the Unit's activities has increased. Through newspapers, periodicals, radio and TV we have been able to reach the public in a way we could never achieve through our own devices.

Special mention must be made of a grant by the Halifax Building Society for the publication of The Country Houses of Greater Manchester. Through their generosity the public is now more aware of this aspect of the county's heritage, and if this leads ultimately to the preservation of more examples of this singularly-interesting class of monument, then their gift will have been justly recognised and rewarded.

The year concludes with a major expansion of the Unit's activities: into Salford, Trafford and Rochdale. A total of 60 new staff will be appointed, to conduct a wide range of practical archaeological and historical activities in these three districts. This expansion begins to meet the strong demand for the provision of broadly-based archaeological services throughout the county.

I am happy to record again my personal thanks to all those associated with the Unit for their active support and encouragement throughout the year, and in particular to the permanent staff of the Unit, who have willingly accepted a four-fold increase in their already-heavy workload over the past year.



Plate 5 Past meets present in Haigh Hall, Wigan

1985

THE GREATER MANCHESTER HERMEOLOGICAL

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