Abstract

The relationships between archaeologists and metal-detector users in England and Wales: Impact of the past and implication for the future

Ever since the hobby of metal detecting emerged in the United Kingdom in the late 1960s, it has been at odds with professional archaeology, due to its apparent encouragement of treasure hunting. This thesis analyses the development and nature of the relationships between archaeologists and metal-detector users, focussing specifically on England and Wales. The roles of key individuals, events and organisations in the formation of legislation, campaigns and frameworks for interaction, are analysed. Therefore, the focus of the thesis is on individuals and processes involved, rather than on archaeological material.

An international context is provided by reference to literature and interviews with individuals from the wider UK, and from other countries where different forms of treasure hunting take place. The role of the international trade in antiquities is also considered.

A significant component of the research is historical analysis; studying archives that had not previously been researched, complemented by interviews with appropriate individuals. This, along with a survey of current metal-detector users and clubs, contributes significant original data to the academic discourse. The thesis is placed into a theoretical context by reference to ‘social capital’ and its application to the relationships between archaeologists and metal-detector users. Reflexive and hermeneutic research methods associated with post-processual theories are applied.

The thesis then analyses the development and success of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS), a unique initiative in England and Wales operating alongside the Treasure Act 1996. This is done utilising the knowledge platform already established in the thesis, and information from professional archaeologists within and outside of PAS, and metal-detector users and the wider public. Reference is also made to recent reviews of PAS and current metal-detector user activity.

Concluding, the thesis recommends further support for and enhancement of PAS, and to focus on improving communication, inclusion and trust. It points to the furtherance of research in this area by establishing, for the first time, an in-depth analysis of both the history and the current status of the relationships between archaeologists and metal-detector users.
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Abbreviations

ACAO  Association of County Archaeological Officers
ACC  Association of County Councils
ACCG  Ancient Coin Collectors Guild
ADA  Antiquity Dealers Association
ADC  Association of District Councils
ALGGO Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers
AMAA Bill  Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Bill
AMAAA  Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act
APPAG  All Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group
BAJR  British Archaeological Jobs Resource
BBC  British Broadcasting Corporation
CAF  Community Archaeology Forum
CBA  Council for British Archaeology
CD  Compact Disc
CIA  Council for Independent Archaeology
CLA  Country Landowners Association
COA  Census Output Area
DCA  Department for Constitutional Affairs
DCMS  Department for Culture Media and Sport
Defra  Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DIG  Detector Information Group
DNH  Department of National Heritage
DoE  Department of the Environment
DOENI  Department of Environment for Northern Ireland
DS  Detecting Society
EDM  Early Day Motion
FID  Federation of Independent Detectorists
FLO  Finds Liaison Officer
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<td>FMDAC</td>
<td>Federation of Metal Detector and Archaeological Clubs Inc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAPPAH</td>
<td>Halte au Pillage do Patrimoine Archaéologique et Historique</td>
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<tr>
<td>HC Deb</td>
<td>House of Commons Debate (Hansard)</td>
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<td>HER</td>
<td>Historic Environment Record</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HL Deb</td>
<td>House of Lords Debate (Hansard)</td>
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<td>HMSO</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Stationary Office</td>
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<td>IARC</td>
<td>Illicit Antiquities Research Centre</td>
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<td>ICCHS</td>
<td>International Centre for Cultural and Heritage Studies</td>
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<td>International Council of Museums</td>
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<td>MA</td>
<td>Museums Association</td>
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<td>Metal Detecting Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCUM</td>
<td>Standing Conference of Unit Managers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>SMA</td>
<td>Society of Museum Archaeologists</td>
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<td>Sites and Monuments Record</td>
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<td>Statistical Package for Social Sciences</td>
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<td>Stop Taking Our Past</td>
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<td>Treasure Hunting Working Party</td>
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