

## **BRITISH MUSEUM HOSTS LAUNCH OF BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL AWARDS 2002 AND HEIRPORT**

On 23 January, at 6pm, **Tam Dalyell**, MP, will launch the British Archaeological Awards at The British Museum (in the Clore Centre for Education).

The **British Archaeological Awards** are the most prestigious awards in British archaeology. Since their foundation in 1976, they have grown till they encompass 12 Awards covering all aspects of British archaeology: the discovery and recording of archaeological finds, sites and monuments; safeguarding and preserving the archaeological heritage; presentation to the public; education and the role of sponsorship.

BAA could not acknowledge excellence and best practice within British archaeology without the support of the various sponsors: Channel Four Television, the Robert Kiln Trust, Spear & Jackson, the Tarmac Group, Transco, Virgin Holidays and Wedgwood, plus archaeological organisations: Association of Industrial Archaeology, Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments, English Heritage, Historic Scotland and our latest addition, the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The competition will culminate in the presentation ceremony to be held in Liverpool in November 2002.

Tam Dalyell will also launch **HEIRPORT**, the new Internet based Historic Environment Information Resources Portal which allows users to search swiftly important historical records held by several different organizations (see separate note).

The launch will be followed by three presentations on exciting new archaeological discoveries: a prehistoric bow found in Scotland, the spectacular hoard of Iron Age treasure from Winchester and a set of Roman jet bears found at Colchester. This acknowledges the success of the Portable Antiquities Scheme in winning the Virgin Holidays Award and the Spear and Jackson 'Silver Trowel' in BAA 2000.

Professor David Breeze, Chairman of the British Archaeological Awards said, "The Awards acknowledge good archaeology and the help archaeologists receive from sponsors, developers and the general public. All make a most important contribution to British archaeology. HEIRPORT is an important way of making new archaeological discoveries accessible to the general public."

Further enquiries to:

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Chairman BAA.

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Hon Secretary BAA

## **PRESS RELEASE: HEIRPORT**

Important historical records in the UK can now be searched swiftly and at their most up-to-date point of access using a radically different Web service.

HEIRPORT, the Historic Environment Information Resources Portal, allows users to search several national heritage databases simultaneously. It provides immediate 24-hour access to the ADS catalogue ArchSearch, CANMORE (the Scottish National Monuments Record), SCRAN (the Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network) and the Portable Antiquities scheme database and in future more databases will become available from museums, National Monuments Records and special interest projects.

People with an interest in their local environment can use HEIRPORT to discover information held by several different organisations. Each institution maintains its own records but searching them individually is time consuming and can be expensive. The Archaeology Data Service (ADS) based at the University of York, offers an alternative that is quick and easy to use but it carries no guarantee that people will find the most complete or up-to-date information. HEIRPORT is tailored to serve their needs and will continue to develop.

The new portal has been constructed for HEIRNET (the Historic Environment Information Resources Network) as part an initiative to enable organisations that hold information about the historic environment to join together, sharing skills and improving access to their resources. HEIRPORT was developed by the ADS at the University of York with technical assistance from the University of Kent at Canterbury and System Simulation Limited.

MP Tam Dalyell will launch HEIRPORT at the British Museum during the British Archaeology Awards 2002 lecture on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Ends.

### Editor's notes

- HEIRPORT is online at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/heirport/>
- ADS exists to collect, catalogue, preserve, and provide user support for digital resources that are a product of archaeological research
- HEIRNET (the Historic environment Information Resources network) is a consortium of organisations with an interest in information relating to archaeology and the historic environment. The membership includes the Council for British Archaeology, the Archaeology Data Service, English Heritage, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales and others.
- ArchSearch is the ADS catalogue which incorporates information from the English Heritage National Monuments Record, the Council for British Archaeology, several regional Sites and Monuments Records and from academic researchers.
- CANMORE is the database of the Scottish National Monuments Records maintained by the RCAHMS
- SCRAN is the Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network
- The Portable Antiquities Scheme is the voluntary recording scheme for chance archaeological finds run by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
- Use of HEIRPORT is free for amateur and academic researchers