

Julian Richards

Born Nottingham 1951.

Archaeology

Educated at Nottingham Boys High School and then, after two gap years spent digging in my home town of Nottingham, at Reading University (1972-5) BA Hons (2:1) in Archaeology. I am a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA) and a full Member of the Institute of Field Archaeologists (MIFA).

From 1975 to 1980 I worked as a Field Officer in the newly formed Berkshire Archaeological Unit. My major publications from this time are 'The Archaeology of the Berkshire Downs' (monograph) and the publication of a project to sample a range of ploughed damaged round barrows on the Berkshire Downs.

From 1980 to 1991 I was a Project Manager with Wessex Archaeology, engaged primarily in directing the Stonehenge Environs Project, a major English Heritage funded survey of the Stonehenge landscape. During this time I published a number of papers concerned with the methodology of surface collection and the analysis of geophysical and geochemical survey data. The project results were published in 1991 as 'The Stonehenge Environs Project' (English Heritage Archaeological Report No 16).

From 1991 to 1994 I was a partner (and co-founder) of AC archaeology, a Wiltshire-based, independent archaeological consultancy and contracting organization.

From 1994 to 1997, having decided to have a break from commercial archaeology, I worked as a home based fieldworker on English Heritage's Monuments Protection Programme. I was responsible for Wiltshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The job involved liaison with landowners and occupiers, fieldwork and recording and the preparation of scheduling documentation.

From 1998 to 2004 I was involved in broadcasting and associated activities (see below Media) returning then to writing, education and 'real' archaeology (see section below).

Education/outreach/publication

Throughout my career in field archaeology I have always been heavily involved in outreach and education, giving talks and leading field trips with local groups, county societies and schools and contributing to many conferences. Until 1995 I was a part time tutor in the Department of Continuing Education at Bristol University, teaching courses at all levels, including at undergraduate level and also devised and taught a number of residential summer schools for visually impaired adults.

As part of my work around Stonehenge I wrote a guide book to the Stonehenge Environs ('Beyond Stonehenge' published by Wessex Archaeology in 1985) and devised a series of illustrated information panels for the National Trust's Stonehenge Estate. The results of the Stonehenge project were also presented in a more accessible form in 'Stonehenge' (English Heritage/Batsford 1991).

I have recently been involved in writing a series of publications for English Heritage. 'Stonehenge; a history in photographs' was published in 2004 followed in 2005 by 'The amazing pop-up Stonehenge'. In the summer of 2005 I built, with the help of several hundred children, a half scale model of Stonehenge at English Heritage's Festival of History. The new site guide book was published in 2005 and 'Stonehenge – the story so far', the full story of the monument and its landscape, in July 2007. I wrote the extended introduction for 'Magic Stones', a book of photographs by the Czech photographer Jan Pohribny that celebrate stone monuments throughout Europe. This was published by Merrell in 2007. Further titles, including more children's books, are in discussion.

During 2007 I was involved in a number of children's events, including three 'Stonehenge' builds (the half scale model out of wood and cardboard) and a week long 'residence' at a Wiltshire special school during which we explored the themes of Stonehenge and the Neolithic. (Returning summer 2009 for a Viking themed enrichment week). I have also been involved in devising projects (in association with 'Learning through Landscapes') to facilitate schools investigating the history of their grounds. This is in addition to a number of public lectures and events (for details of 2009 talks etc see website – updating January 2009)

In January 2008 I completed, on behalf of English Heritage's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund team, a study of the outreach components of all ALSF projects to date. This was published under the title 'The Sands of Time' in March 2008.

During 2008 (13th June to 20th September) I was the guest curator at Salisbury Museum for a multi media HLF funded exhibition entitled 'Inspired by Stonehenge'. This looks at the ways people have reacted to Stonehenge over the centuries through souvenirs and personal recollections. I am involved in the programme of outreach that is part of this project, working with school children, art college students and learning disabled adults. This exhibition moved to Chippenham in the autumn of 2008 and will be at the Wiltshire Heritage Museum in Devizes from May to September 2009. Each venue has associated outreach projects.

Since November 2009 I have been on the register of Heritage Lottery Fund Mentors, Expert Advisers and Associate Monitors.

I am currently (April 2009) preparing, on behalf of English Heritage, a Conservation Plan for the monument of Old Sarum.

In January 2009 I worked on the excavation of a Bronze Age site on a new school build project in Blandford, Dorset. I acted as the liaison between the excavation and visiting schools who participated in a range of activities. I also supervised the production of a film about the excavation made by school media students. This project may develop into a community landscape project under the banner 'Blandford BC'.

Media

In 1994 I was asked to be a main contributor in a BBC2 documentary (series title 'Secrets of Lost Empires') that would examine how Stonehenge could have been built. The results of the experiments that were commissioned by the TV production were published by myself and engineer Mark Whitby as 'The Engineering of Stonehenge' in 'Stonehenge, Science and Society' (British Academy 1997).

In 1997, together with BBC researcher Tanya Linden, I devised a format for a television programme that would involve the excavation and analysis of human remains. This series was commissioned and from 1997 to 2004 I researched, presented, and co-wrote 35 episodes of what became known as 'Meet the Ancestors' for the History/Archaeology department of the BBC. I wrote and took many of the photographs for the booklet that accompanied the first series and the book, published by BBC Worldwide in 1999, that accompanied the second. Throughout this time I contributed regularly to the BBC's History Magazine (I am on its advisory panel) and also to the History Website, for which I devised the interactive game 'Hunt the Ancestor' (winner of the ICT category in the British Archaeological Awards for 2000). I also took part in on-line live web discussions subsequent to broadcasts. The programme 'Chariot Queen' won the broadcast category in the 2002 British Archaeological Awards.

In 2001 I presented 'Blood of the Vikings' (initially 6 x 50) for BBC2, an examination of the cultural and genetic impact of the Vikings on the British Isles. I wrote the book that was produced to accompany this series (Hodder and Stoughton 2001) and devised the interactive 'Viking Quest' game for the History Website. I was also the writer and producer of the revised version of the series (2 x 50) for Discovery. This involved directing additional filming in Newfoundland. The series was subsequently revised as six 30 minute programmes for BBC2.

From 1999 to 2005 I presented on Radio 4 'Mapping the Town', a highly popular series that examines the historical, cultural and economic influences that have shaped the towns and cities of today. Over these years the programme examined over 60 towns and cities both in the UK and abroad.

I have been employed as a consultant by the BBC Science Department and by BBC Education to develop both programme ideas and formats for on-line education.

In 2004 I filmed a contribution with Lion TV for C5's 'Top Ten Treasures of Britain', recorded two programmes for the Radio 4 'People's D Day' celebration and made a five part series for Radio 4, 'Digging for Britain' about archaeological 'greats'.

In 2005, while engaged primarily in writing, I made a further series of 'Mapping the Town', was a guest (twice) on CBBC's Xchange and had the pleasure of showing the real thing to the team from Discovery Channel's 'American Chopper'.

In 2006, while being heavily involved in writing, lecturing and archaeological 'events', I presented a five part series 'Men of Stone' (about the Portland Stone industry), Testbed Productions for Radio 4, and filmed an in-house 'Timewatch' about Hadrian's Wall for BBC 2 (broadcast January 2007). I also presented '60 years of the National Trust at Stourhead' (Chris Corden Productions for the National Trust) and a non-broadcast film about Barrow-in-Furness Abbey (Spiral Productions for the Barrow Dock Museum).

In Spring 2007 I showed Vic Reeves around Stonehenge for 'Britain's best View' (broadcast August 2007) and contributed to a BBC4 film on archaeology and the media. In the autumn I started filming (as presenter) 'Buildings Wonders', on a series for ITV West on how great icons of the region (including Stonehenge and Concorde) were built. I also presented a short non-broadcast film about the archaeological discoveries that were made along the route of the new High Speed Rail Link into London.

In 2008 I finished filming 'Buildings Wonders' (broadcast February/March) and wrote, presented and co-produced (with Chris Corden Productions) a non-broadcast film, 'Lindisfarne 793 - a clash of cultures', for the Lindisfarne Heritage Trust.

In March 2009 I filmed a contribution to a new panel show hosted by comedians Andy Hamilton and Reginald D Hunter: 'It's only a Theory'. This will be broadcast on BBC 4 in May 2009.

I don't generally mention my two appearances on 'Good Morning with Richard and Judy' but am proud of my Blue Peter badge.

General

I am fit and in good health, practical and adaptable. I have a full UK driving license and own and drive a 12 seater Landrover and a 1959 Triumph TR3. I have a great interest in the Arts and Crafts movement of the late 19th – early 20th centuries and a passion for all forms of historic motor sport.

I can take conventional and digital still images (many examples published) and basic video. I am computer literate.

Summary

Although by training and experience I am an archaeologist and historian who has worked mainly in the more ancient past, I have a great curiosity about all periods, about the places, the landscapes, the changing environment, the buildings and the objects, but most of all about the people. The past surrounds us all, it is part of our everyday lives whether we are aware of it or not and my 'mission' is to bring this past to life, to tease out the fascinating stories that it has to tell.

For further details then please contact me.

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Updated April 2009