

The Hazardous Project Site Report - October 1996.

Introduction

The sea conditions early in the season as usual were not favourable, when sea conditions improved, the very hot weather increased the plankton bloom making for very poor visibility therefore the diving on site was limited to monitoring conditions and searching for uncovered artefacts loose on the seabed.

We were unable to carry out the proposed excavation of the south end of the site, due to the lack of a suitable boat for pump and equipment, required for the operation.

The north end of the site has remained stable and silt levels over all remain as last season.

The gap between the guns also remains as last season at approximately 5cms. During the early dives of the season it was noted that the south east side of the site had silted back in during the winter months, levels appeared close to those of pre 1994, when the area was opened to clay bed level by natural erosion. The area centred around the cannon ball mound has seen considerable movement of sediment back and forth through the season, various artefacts have been uncovered.

There has been a further loss of timbers at the south end of the site, although no damage was done to datums or cannon in the surrounding area as in previous years, therefore it would seem most likely that this loss has been caused by the winter storms and general erosion that has taken place in this area of the site.

An extensive video of the site was taken by the A.D.U. during their visit and it is hoped that this will be available for comparison with video taken on site in previous years.

Site Plan

The attached plan of the middle of the site shows positions of Artefacts and one concretion found on the surface or partly exposed, which have now been recovered.

Artefacts

The following artefacts and one concretion were recorded and raised during the course of the season and are currently in wet store at our facility at Nunington Farm awaiting further processing and recording.

- Concretion - Feature-P, visible artefact, leg of brass divider.
- M.S 239 - Handle, possibly ivory.
- M.S 240 - Large pewter button.
- M.S 241 - Pewter stud.
- M.S 242 - Buckle pin (brass).
- M.S 243 - Brass shoe buckle.
- M.S 244 - Section divider (hinge).
- M.S 245 - Brass buckle (broken).

The display units of artefacts set up through last winter have been open to the public throughout the summer and have received a great deal of interest, displays and information sheets etc. will be improved on over this winter, ready for next summer as it has now been agreed the site of the display is permanent for the foreseeable future.

Diving Schedule

Diving operations were carried out on ten separate days. This resulted in thirty two man hours on site by the following divers:- Iain Grant, Peter Jolly, James Edwards, Alexandra Hildred, Dennis Tennant, Ian Oxley (A.D.U.).

The dates of diving days were as follows:- 14th. April, 6th. May, 9th. June, 25th. July, 28th. July, 4th. August, 16th. August, 8th. September, 11th. September, 15th. September.

Intention for 1997

We propose excavating the remaining sand/silt covering over the clay-bed from the middle of the site, working towards the south end, recording and lifting artefacts and small concretions as detailed in our 1996 report, as we were unable to carry out the proposed intention this season. We intend having a suitable boat available for this work next year.

We feel that there is now a real need to "rescue" the artefacts remaining in this area of the site, before they are lost, due to the continually changing pattern of erosion taking place.