

Keith Muckelroy Memorial Award 2015

In 2009 there were six entries - three books and three articles. In 2011 there were three nominations, two books and one article. In 2013 four nominations were received, all monographs. This year there were 11, all monographs, varying in length from under 100 pages to over 750. In alphabetical order they are:

David Blackman and Boris Rankov, ***Shipheds of the Ancient Mediterranean***, nominated separately by John Peter Oleson of the University of Victoria, and by Angela Croome.

Serena Cant, ***England's Shipwreck Heritage: from logboats to U-boats***, nominated by Angela Croome.

Jonathan Coad, ***Support for the Fleet***, nominated by Angela Croome.

Kevin Crisman (ed), ***Coffins of the Brave: Lake Shipwrecks of the War of 1812***, nominated separately by Andrew Lambert of Kings College London and by Texas A&M University Press.

Wendy van Duivenvoorde, ***Dutch East India Company Shipbuilding: the archaeological study of Batavia and other 17th-century VOC ships***, nominated by Texas A&M University Press.

Niklas Eriksson, ***Urbanism under sail: an archaeology of fluitships in early-modern everyday life***, nominated by Mirja Arnshav of the Swedish Maritime Museum.

Innes McCartney, ***The Maritime Archaeology of a Modern Conflict: Comparing the archaeology of German submarine wrecks to the historical text***, nominated by Jane Maddocks.

Stuart Needham, Dave Parham and Catherine Frieman, ***Claimed by the Sea***, nominated by Kate Welham of Bournemouth University.

Lincoln Paine, ***Sea and Civilisation***, nominated by Angela Croome.

Warren Riess and Sheli Smith, ***The Ship that held up Wall Street***, nominated by Texas A&M University Press.

Louise Tizzard, Andrew Bicket and Dimitri de Loecker, ***Seabed Prehistory: Investigating the Palaeogeography and Early Middle Palaeolithic Archaeology in the Southern North Sea***, nominated by Laura Joyner of Wessex Archaeology.

As ever, these books covered a wide range of topics, which made assessment more difficult. One of them

was co-authored by Dave Parham, so he had to stand down from the judging panel this year, leaving Colin Martin, Paula Martin, Mark Redknap and Alison Sheridan. Without this reduction to four it would have been almost impossible for the judges to read and circulate all the nominated books in the time available.

The number of nominations prompted the judges to look closely at the criteria. Nominated books should reflect the interests, aspirations, and high scholarly standards of Keith Muckelroy. This implies, in our judgement, nautical or maritime archaeology (interests), reaching testable archaeological conclusions by the systematic acquisition, processing, and analysis of data (aspirations), and the highest scholarly standards.

Given the quality of many of the nominations, it was clear that the winner was going to be among the works of primary research rather than more general publications. It is recommended that the wording of the announcement for the 2017 award should be re-drafted to explain more precisely the criteria expected. We don't want to be so prescriptive as to exclude the innovative and original, but 'nautical', 'maritime' and above all 'archaeology' should be leading elements in all submissions.



The judges' decision is presented in ascending order:

We start with four books which did not make the shortlist

Sea and Civilisation, by Lincoln Paine, is a vast work in which the author synthesises humankind's journey towards what we characterise as 'civilisation' from a seaward perspective which, as he cogently argues, is the appropriate one to adopt. It is a conscious counterblast to the terrestrial focus which past global historians, almost without exception, have adopted and many still adopt, and as such it is a welcome breath of fresh air. Thorough and well illustrated, it emphasises the role of maritime transport and trade in world history, and in a non-Euro-centric way, for which it is to be commended.

But the judges agreed that it is essentially a work of history, and of synthesis and interpretation rather than original research. The author should be congratulated for having taken on board the results of archaeological work around the world, thereby helping them to become embedded within future historical narratives, though this is truer of earlier times. For later periods, when archaeological and historical evidence might have been combined to produce fresh and perhaps unexpected conclusions, the author has dropped his archaeological focus in favour of more conventional documentary-based interpretations.

Support for the Fleet, by Jonathan Coad, is a survey of the history and buildings of British naval dockyards around the world, and a study of how the demands of the navy led to early standardisation and industrialisation. It is, we all agreed, a labour of love and a life's work, and very well presented and illustrated. However, it is mainly a work of architectural and industrial history, and contains only two casual mentions of archaeology, neither of which relates to anything maritime. Though not therefore a contender for this award, it is an original, important and beautifully illustrated work covering maritime-related architecture and manufacturing, and we are sure it will be of great interest to many maritime archaeologists.

England's Shipwreck Heritage, by Serena Cant, focuses on shipwrecks rather than maritime heritage in its wider sense. The author reviews how multi-disciplinary research is revealing gripping stories – social, economic, political, industrial and naval - behind some of the thousands of shipwrecks around the coast of England. Shipboard material culture is touched upon, but its value as a microcosm of maritime society is not surveyed in depth. Accurate reconstructions of early ships are absent (assuming a degree of knowledge in the reader), though early-modern shipping is well illustrated. An useful synthesis, but largely secondary and no new archaeology.

The Ship that held up Wall Street, by Warren Riess and Sheli Smith, is an entertaining read, giving a good description, warts and all, of this project, and a useful summary report. It is particularly good at describing archaeology to the layman, with all its frustrations, and explaining the importance of merchant ships. However, it lacks the archaeological detail required of a definitive report. It seemed to fall between a popular book and an archaeological report, offering little detail on timbers recorded or the numerous artefacts found during the excavation.

The next three books are Commended

Seabed Prehistory, by Louise Tizzard et al., is a valuable demonstration of landscape archaeology underwater, a subject that Muckelroy valued despite the limitations of technology at the time of his own work. Most submerged landscape advances were then being made in the clearer waters of the Mediterranean and for Classical periods. This focused publication looking at one specific location of aggregate extraction, known as 'Area 240', demonstrates, albeit to peers and colleagues rather than the public, what can now be achieved through teamwork in the North Sea, and more specifically for the Early

Middle Palaeolithic period. It moves on from the initial coining of Doggerland to break new ground. There was some discussion among the judges as to how well this fitted the criteria, being more of a palaeoenvironmental/landscape reconstruction study than maritime archaeology. But the quality of the work encouraged us to give it the benefit of the doubt.

Coffins of the Brave: Lake Shipwrecks of the War of 1812, edited and part-authored by Kevin Crisman, is a useful compilation of essays on the history and archaeology of the navies and shipwrecks of the inconclusive 1812-14 war between the United States and Britain, much of which was fought on the Great Lakes. Neither side had made preparations to campaign in this environment, and, because there was no access from the sea for vessels of any size, both sides had to build their warships on the lakeside. This involved much improvisation and little documentation, which has limited historical interpretations of the war.

However, as some ships were sunk, while others were abandoned, there is a rich archaeological resource, and the fresh water has ensured high levels of preservation, particularly the virtually-intact US Navy schooners *Hamilton* and *Scourge*. This book brings together a wealth of little-known material alongside recent thinking on more famous sites. Some aspects, such as the material culture on board the vessels, are not well covered, and it could have included more theory and detailed analysis. But this is an important book, providing a baseline for further studies.

Urbanism under Sail, by Niklas Eriksson, is an original and valuable study, a very convincing and wide-ranging thesis. *Fluits* were mobile elements of their parent urban cultures, and their functions and associated symbolism changed with the phases of a voyage. A relatively small proportion of their time was spent at sea. At other times, tied up on a waterfront, they metamorphosed from ships into the equivalent of houses occupying urban space. They became temporary townscapes, reflecting their ports of origin along the waterfronts of foreign harbours, their decorated sterns mirroring the Dutch-style gables which front many north-west European harbours.

This work demonstrates what can be learnt about deep-water wrecks from photography and survey alone. Although some investigation of the interiors has been possible, a policy of non-intervention and preservation in situ has restricted conventional archaeological work based on artefact recording and analysis. Eriksson's approach is sociological, architectural, and political. He makes the point that because *fluits* dominated the seaways throughout north-west Europe from the late 16th century into the 18th, their very ordinariness rendered them almost invisible.

Were we to rely on written sources alone we would know almost nothing about them. His main concern is with the use of space within the ships and what this can tell us about the work patterns and social relationships of those on board. The locations of decks, bulkheads, windows, ports, hatches and ladders thus define spaces and direct human actions, and a careful study of these aspects leads to convincing and valuable conclusions.

It was so difficult to decide that we have three equal Runners-Up

Shipheds of the Ancient Mediterranean, by David Blackman and Boris Rankov, is an excellent bringing together of wide-ranging research conducted over many years on shipsheds, with a gazetteer that will become a key work of reference for years to come. This is both a 'gateway' publication to the subject, and a corpus of research of great importance for our understanding of Classical shipping and its operations. The publication is comprehensive and scholarly.

Dutch East India Company Shipbuilding, by Wendy van Duivenvoorde, is a well-crafted, detailed and scholarly report on the *Batavia* hull and its wider content within VOC shipbuilding and comparable 17th-century ships, and a must for anyone interested in European shipbuilding traditions of the early-modern period. It contains much original research, and clearly demonstrates the value of detailed hull-recording and analysis. *Batavia* was wrecked off Western Australia in 1629, and her remains were excavated by the Western Australian Museum in the 1970s. The artefacts were published by Jeremy Green in 1989, but the ship's well-preserved transom stern and associated structure, which was dismantled, conserved and re-erected as part of the museum's display, remained unpublished because of the complexity of the task and the time required to complete it.

Dutch shipbuilding techniques in the earlier part of the 17th century had been little understood, because ships were still built by traditional methods which did not involve mathematical calculations or drafted plans. This method, now characterised as 'bottom-based' construction, was widespread in north-west Europe, and, of the relatively few vessels of this type so far examined with archaeological rigour, *Batavia* is of outstanding importance in understanding the drivers of change from traditional shipbuilding to the formulaic designs of the early modern era. Its achievement in chronicling the full significance of 'bottom-based' and 'frame-first' approaches is immeasurable. Evidence of powered saw-milling is important - a 3000% efficiency increase over hand-sawn production.

As an archaeological report this volume cannot be faulted (except for the lack of an adequate site-plan, for which the author bears no blame). But it is much more than that. The combination of archaeology with documentary sources and parallel material from other sites in addressing such wide and globally significant issues is exemplary.

The Maritime Archaeology of a Modern Conflict, by Innes McCartney, is a brilliant, thorough, clear and convincing piece of primary research. It should be essential reading for anyone studying metal shipwrecks, a field marched over by numerous historians, but not archaeologists applying rigorous analysis to all available sources. It demonstrates the validity of research-focused methodologies in the archaeological investigation of modern shipwrecks. This counters a still widely-held view that the availability of extensive documentary sources, plans, photographs, and other evidence renders archaeology superfluous in the study of such ships. By combining a physical investigation of 63 U-Boat wrecks in the English Channel during the 1914-18 and 1939-45 conflicts with documentary and other

material the author undertakes a highly significant reappraisal of allied counter-strategies against the U-Boat threat in two world wars.

McCartney produces a well-constructed research design and methodology, and successfully draws out illuminating conclusions. The presentation of data in case-studies is clear, with cleverly thought-out submarine diagrams and supporting images. It offers a much-needed antidote to the unscientific reporting of U-boats within mainstreaming diving. This is pure archaeology, conducted with skill, a high level of technical knowledge, and interpretative rigour.

Such an approach would have fascinated Muckelroy. Although outside the interests he pursued during his short scholarly career, the idea of assembling cohorts of data from the sea-bed and then applying them to the elucidation of wider issues was central to his combination of intellectual rigour with 'thinking outside the box'.

And finally we come to this year's Winner

The judges were unanimous in their choice of ***Claimed by the Sea***, by Stuart Needham, Dave Parham and Catherine Frieman. This book is successfully edited to produce one clear, seamless narrative. It brings to fruition the major contributions made by Keith Muckelroy to the study of the Salcombe and Langdon Bay artefact assemblages and their relevance both to site-formation studies (addressing the question of whether they originated from wrecks, and if not, how can they be explained?), and to wider issues of maritime trade in the Bronze Age.

Keith undoubtedly saw these sites as bridges between underwater and terrestrial archaeology, crossing the artificial and unhealthy perceptual divide which then existed and to some extent still does. Archaeology is archaeology irrespective of the environment in which it is conducted, as this submission makes abundantly clear. It is beyond question that without Keith's pioneering input these supremely important investigations would not have developed in the exemplary manner that has resulted in this publication.

Most of us were not aware of just how much effort and personal sacrifice Keith invested in ensuring the proper treatment of these initially unprotected sites, often in the face of legal and bureaucratic obstructions, so the detailed chronicling of the evolution of the two projects is an important and hitherto unpublished aspect of the early days of nautical archaeology in Britain. Top-quality scholarship is done justice by a beautifully produced book, demonstrating how a detailed consideration of all aspects of these sites, from discovery and site methodologies to geomorphology, artefact analysis, and modelling site-formation processes, creates new understandings of a very remote period. A significant contribution to knowledge through nautical archaeology, and a model report many would do well to emulate.

Colin Martin, Paula Martin, Mark Redknap and Alison Sheridan

25 September 2015