

# **GROSVENOR 1782**

## **REPORT ON THE 2006 AND 2007 FIELDWORK SEASONS**

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conservator**

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**Annual report prepared on behalf of Argo and Tyroon**

## **INTRODUCTION**

2006/2007 season was dedicated to implementing the recommendations set by the CMA in 2005, as well as to prepare for a full season of excavation in 2008.

- At 2005 end-of-season accurate fixing of underwater grid datum points had still not been fixed by Total Station due to adverse weather conditions, so this remained a priority before any further excavation could take place.
- In addition many of the datum points had disappeared or were deteriorating, and at least two at different ends of the grid had to be re-established.
- Further work was required to collect data for an overall site map.
- In addition Argo/Tyroon wanted to identify and prepare cannon for lifting in the 2008 season and, if possible, move them to a more accessible area. Another goal for this season was to explore several areas seawards of D.P. 13 and 14 towards the area of ballast and timbers discovered in 2005. (see map in appendix.)

### **Diving July 2006:**

As soon as the permit was issued, Argo/Tyroon sent S.Valentine and P.Valentine to do a preliminary check on the site before the arrival of the Hungarian excavation team.

Weather conditions were adverse with extremely rough seas and poor visibility. Few dives were made during the 3 weeks but what was immediately obvious was that a large amount of sand was covering the site. Most of the gully was under sand from D.P.8 seawards - the area we needed to excavate was covered by more than one metre of sand and visibility was very poor. Argo advised Mr. Varga to postpone excavation until 2007 season.

### **Diving June 2007:**

During March/April 2007 our east coast was battered by huge seas caused by a cyclone coinciding with an equinox creating very high tides and huge waves. These conditions would definitely move sand from the site. Argo and Tyroon decided to send a team of 4: András Benyó, S. Valentine, L. Melidonis and D. Mouton in an attempt to achieve the goals set out in 2006. Once we buoyed relevant positions J. Sharfman from S.A.H.R.A. agreed to come to join us and oversee the recording of these data-points using a Total Station.

Conditions were favourable and diving commenced early in June. Dramatic changes had occurred on the site and surrounding beaches. The huge seas had distributed cannon, cast iron ballast and debris over the entire area excavated in 1999 → 2000 → 2001 fieldwork seasons. However, the area of intact timbers and ballast found in 2005 was still covered by sand.

### **Datum Points:**

All the stainless steel pegs marking data points had been smashed off, but we were able to locate the holes in the bedrock where they used to be attached. We re-established and buoyed data points 14 and 20, which are at opposite ends of the site map, and would be sufficient for J. Sharfman to orient the site map to the surveyed cardinal points.

We also buoyed several other cannon and anchors which would serve as reference datum points when we produce the final site map. Unfortunately when J. Sharfman arrived in mid-June we had very rough seas and could not do the surveying with the Total Station. Now that these data points have been re-established it will be a priority to complete these measurements next season.

### **Preparation of the cannon:**

We have identified the outside cannon as those which are in the best condition. A microlight aircraft flight over the outside site showed these cannon still to be covered by sand. We did however identify a 9-inch cannon inshore which is in good condition, and spent several dives loosening and preparing this gun for lifting. We decided not to move it for the moment, as it is unlikely to sand up. We still need to have a Steering Committee meeting with East London Museum to decide how many guns we will lift. We also met with Col. Opperman of 15<sup>th</sup> Squadron who has agreed that they would lift the cannon for us as an exercise for the Oryx helicopters. Argo/Tyroon would like to organise this as a media event for next season.

### **Exploration of Site Seawards of D.P 14:**

It was agreed with J. Sharfman that no excavation would take place during 2007 season, as no archaeologist was available to be on the site. It was, however, agreed that we could dig several exploratory holes between D.P.14 and the timbers to ascertain the extent of the wreckage. The overburden of sand, shell and rocks etc. was found to be approximately 1m. deep. Several holes were dug by hand: in each case wreckage was located on or near the bedrock in these holes. We concluded that this entire area needs to be excavated using pumps in the future (see site map). During the clearing of the cannon and digging of exploratory holes, 1 coin and a pewter decanter lid were uncovered. Their position was duly noted and they were handed in for conservation. Part of a brass telescope was also found washed up after the storm. This was also handed in.

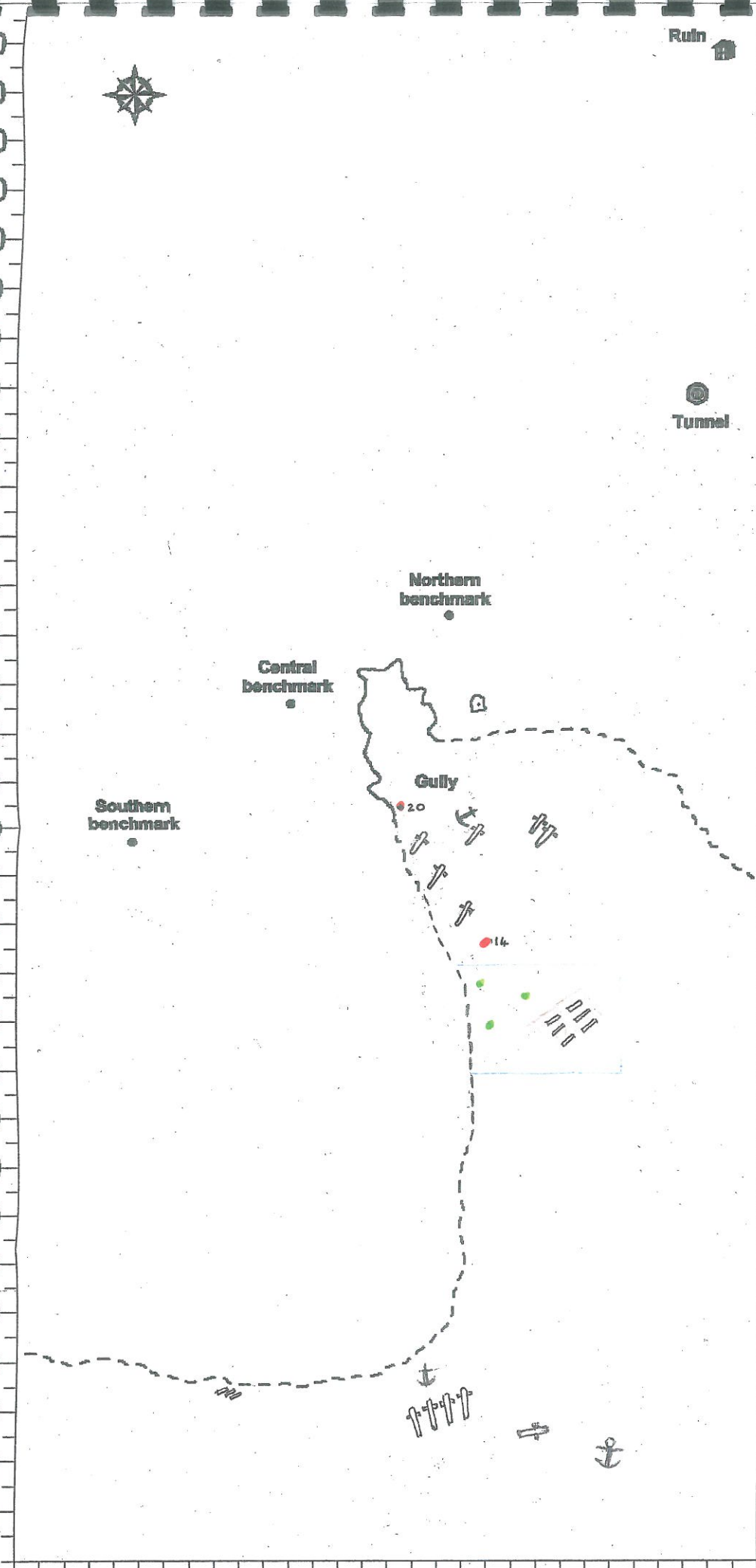
### **Site Map:**

We have drawn a site map (see appendix) based on GPS data. The grid however is oriented by only one GPS reference, on D.P 20. We hope to improve on this map next season, when we hope to confirm the position of the grid, cannon, anchors and timbers in relation to the cardinal markers, using the Total Station equipment.

### **Conclusion:**

During this time we managed to get about 35 hours of bottom time on the site. We achieved some of our goals and confirmed that further excavation needs to be done between D.P.13 and D.P.14 and the area of intact ship's timbers. We also re-established datum points of the excavation grid, which will be needed conclusively to orient the grid to Total Station co-ordinates, which will be the first objective for the 2008 season. Our aim in 2008, furthermore, is to resume excavations with an approved archaeologist on site along with all the required equipment like pumps, classifiers etc. And we hope to be able finally to recover the selected cannons with the help of 15 Squadron and proceed with the establishment of a satellite museum at the site under the auspices of SAHRA and the East London Museum.

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General site map  
WGS84, UTM

- KEY:**
- Datum Points
  - Test Holes
  - Timbers
  - Cannon
  - Anchor
  - Ballast
  - Proposed 2008 excavation

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