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Book Reviews



MARINE ARCHAEOLOGY: A HANDBOOK. By Virginia Dellion-Musgrave. Pp. xi and 110, Illus 26. Council for British Archaeology (Practical Handbook, **20**), 2012. Price: £12.00. ISBN 978 190277 191 5.

This volume is a recent addition to the Council for British Archaeology's revamped 'Practical Handbook' series. The stated aim of the book is to 'enable popular access to information regarding the marine historic environment' (p. x), targeting a wide audience including amateurs and non-marine archaeologists.

The first chapter seeks to define the marine historic environment, characterize the nature of the marine archaeology in contrast with commercial salvage, and provide a brief introduction to the history of maritime archaeology. For those not familiar with the UK's marine estate, this provides a useful summary of marine zones, notions of ownership of the territorial seabed and traditional rights. The second chapter briefly introduces the main sectors involved in marine archaeology in the UK, before considering key topic areas of research, management, development-led work, as well as education and outreach, through which these sectors are involved. This chapter concludes with a reflection on current challenges, with an emphasis on the continuing need to improve the knowledge base and the culture and infrastructure for accessible archive deposition.

The following chapters deal with aspects of the methods, approaches and policies of the sub-discipline in more detail. Chapter 3 looks at marine archaeology projects with useful sections on project planning, sources of existing data, and fieldwork and health and safety practices on diving projects. Subsequent sections on assessment and analysis and interpretation make good use of project examples, showing the range of approaches in marine archaeology. For example, Chapter 4 provides a particularly welcome review of current UK marine administration, policy and legislation, much of which will be unfamiliar even to professional archaeologists more used to operating in the terrestrial environment. The next chapter broadens the scope to consider how international conventions and European directives act as drivers in marine archaeology in the UK. Chapter 6 provides very brief conclusions and is followed by a glossary and pointers to guidance and resources. Endnotes at the conclusion of each chapter provide very welcome, even if potentially ephemeral, links to appropriate web resources. These, along with a brief bibliography, provide directions for further reading and research.

One would expect professional archaeologists operating in the marine environment to find relatively little new within this handbook. The brevity and clarity of presentation and the use of recent project examples is commendable and this book should form a useful primer for students, vocational archaeologists, and the increasing number of professionals

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involved in marine spatial planning, particularly where the historic environment needs consideration alongside potentially competing demands. In this respect, one of the handbook's chief strengths is the concise review of existing legislation and associated policy. The extent to which devolution is already creating divergences in legislation and policy within the UK is recognized in this edition, but the raft of forthcoming legislative change anticipated, particularly in the home countries, suggests that a second edition will be needed in the none-too-distant future to maintain currency. It is to the author's credit, and a reflection of this handbook's usefulness, that future updated editions should be considered by the publishers.

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