

David Wyatt, interviewed by Tracey Loughran, 1 October 2025

David Wyatt is Emeritus Reader in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff University. He is a historian of slavery in the early Middle Ages and co-Director of the multiple award-winning CAER Heritage Project. He is the author of the chapter 'Taking History into the World' in *A Practical Guide to Studying History* (second edition).

Interview

Tracey Loughran (TL): *So, I'm just going to start by asking when, where and what you studied at university.*

David Wyatt (DW): Oh, well that was thirty-something years ago.

I came into university by an unusual route and not a traditional route by any stretch of the imagination. So, I left school at sixteen in the 1980s with a handful of GCSEs, well O-levels as was, and just went into a fairly dead-end job because that was what everyone else did. And, you know, I come from a family where no one's gone into higher education, and I just wanted to get out and work, and so I had to get out and work. So, I didn't come into university until my late twenties, which now seems young. But at the time, I felt like I'd been around a bit, I'd done quite a lot of stuff, you know, had my own house, done some travelling and worked in a dead-end job for donkey's years. And when I jacked that in to go travelling, I didn't want to go back to that. Now, I had done an A-level in History at night class for fun because history's always inspired me, and that was the one thing I'd done well in at school, I got a decent mark for my History O-level. So, when I was working in this dead-end job, I went to a night class and did an A-level in History. We did repeal of the Corn Laws and all that stuff, and even then, I did love it. I did

This is an edited transcript of an interview carried out over telephone.

it in one year, and I was working full time, and I got a C. But when I decided to change my life a little bit and I thought about coming into higher education, that C got me onto a degree because I was an adult learner. So, I started off in Bangor in North Wales because that was a natural place to go as a mature student back then, thirty per cent of their intake were mature students. So, it was great because there were lots of people like me coming back into learning. I went there to study history and archaeology. But as it happened, things in my personal life didn't quite work out there. My long-term relationship broke up, and also, they didn't do any archaeology fieldwork, which I wanted to do. So, I moved to Cardiff University as a second year, which was challenging in itself because I didn't really know anybody. And I came to Cardiff, I guess it was 1995. I started in Bangor in 1993, did a year, took a year out, went back to work in my dead-end job for a year, and then came to Cardiff as a second year in 1995. But I managed to transfer onto a degree in history and archaeology at Cardiff.

TL: *Had you moved to go to Bangor? Had you been living in Cardiff before you went to Bangor?*

DW: Oh, no, no, no, no. I'm from Gloucestershire. So, I moved to Bangor. I used to go to Bangor because I used to have a camper van and I went camping there and stuff. I loved North Wales. So, that's another reason why I gravitated to Bangor, because of the beautiful mountains and stuff like that. And back then, all of the universities in Wales were part of the University of Wales, so they were more affiliated and getting a transfer from Bangor to Cardiff was almost like an internal thing. I had to have an interview. But I hadn't been to Cardiff other than we came to Cardiff on a field trip from Bangor to see an amazing Iron Age hoard (the Snettisham treasure) at Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum of Wales. It's interesting there's this Iron Age connection given I ended up working on an Iron Age fort in Cardiff many years later. And, that's what brought me to Cardiff. I came on a field trip to see this wonderful treasure of Iron Age torcs and stuff that was being hosted at the Museum. I'd never been to Cardiff before that field trip. And, I was like, oh, wow, this is such a lovely city. I love it here. It's just really nice. So, when things went a bit wrong in Bangor I decided to transfer to Cardiff, because it was in the University of Wales, and also because I'd had this really positive visit there and I'd seen a wonderful city and how friendly it was.

TL: *You said you'd always been interested in history, but had you done any archaeology before you started your degree?*

DW: No, none at all. I think *Time Team* was just starting then, I quite liked archaeology stuff on telly. I was attracted to that kind of practical, visceral side of it, of hands-on discovery. And I quite liked

that I could blend it with history. And I'm really, really glad I did that. I ended up becoming a historian, a medieval historian, but I always felt like there was a lot of archaeology in that. And it made me think much more in interdisciplinary ways about my historical research later on. But I had no previous experience in archaeology, I'd not been on any digs or anything like that. It just seemed like a good idea.

TL: *It sounds like by the time you were thinking about transferring, the ability to do that practical side of it was really quite important in making your decision about where to go as well.*

DW: Yeah, I think it was a factor. And obviously, there's so few universities that do archaeological fieldwork now. Cardiff still does. And it's such a shame because going on these fieldwork modules was life-changing in lots of ways. Before I even started at Cardiff, I was told that because they do fieldwork there, I had to go on a dig. I had to go on a dig that summer before I'd even come to university at Cardiff. And the only one available was on Anglesey. So I got in my little Mini and drove back up to North Wales again and went on a dig. And that was a twelfth, thirteenth-century site, not far off my period I ended up looking at. And I also looked extensively at slave raiding in the North Wales coast and that sort of stuff. These things join up later on, don't they? But we dug a court of a Welsh prince, the Llys Rhosyr site, which has since been reconstructed as a full medieval court at the Amgueddfa Cymru/National Museum of Wales St Fagans, about a mile away from Ely and Caerau where I ended up doing the CAER project later on. And you know, the digs were very important. I learned at the digs about how they bring people together, how they create communities, how they create friendships out of very disparate people from lots of different backgrounds and how incredibly engaging they are to people outside the academy and to communities. All of those things I learned and picked up on those digs. And I also made an amazing group of friends who looked after me when I came to Cardiff, because I didn't know anybody in Cardiff at that point. Because I was a mature student coming back in my late twenties, I would have struggled with that otherwise because there was no network for mature students at that time in Cardiff.

TL: *Listening to you tell that story, so much of what you later went on to do in your career was threaded through that early experience.*

DW: That's true and I think that's true for a lot of students, isn't it? And it's very relevant for *A Practical Guide to Studying History*. University is a very formative experience in that respect, in terms of the things that inspire you, the networks you make, the friendships you make, the connections that lead on to what you do in later life. And that doesn't necessarily have to be in the set of skills that we get

from doing the subjects that we study, that can be in different ways, but those networks and those experiences still inspire a huge deal.

TL: *You had a non-traditional route into doing a degree and ended up with a non-traditional historian's career as well. So could you talk through how you ended up becoming a historian and some of those non-traditional routes that you went down?*

DW: So, that thread of how I came to university and how it changed my life. I mean, I just can't, I can't, it's difficult to express that in a powerful enough way, you know. Having come from a background where no one went into higher education, I didn't even think about it. I didn't even think it was something I could do. I didn't think about what it might be like or what the benefits were. I just had no concept of it at all really. And then, even in those early days, you know, once I started in Bangor and I was in my first year, still writing essays by hand back then, it blew me away. The first year was just like, you know, this is amazing. I'm discovering all these sources, I'm going to all these amazing sites, I'm in the library, I'm making all these new friends. It was massively eye-opening and life-changing for me. Once I got the bug, once I really got into thinking about history and archaeology, and when I came to Cardiff, obviously the dig took that to another level, which I've mentioned. And then there was another dig the following year, which was amazing, where we dug Viking sites in the Western Isles and I got to go out to the Outer Hebrides, which, again, connected to my research, you know, slave trade routes and stuff like that later on. So, I just didn't want it to stop. And I've seen this time and time again with many adult learners who've come through on the Exploring the Past pathway, and I'll say a bit about that in a second. But that momentum was really all I needed at that stage. I wasn't thinking, oh, here's going to be a career, I'm going to be an academic, at that stage. I was thinking, gimme, gimme, gimme some more of this amazing ability, this chance to discover the past in various different ways. And that's all I wanted to do. I was quite happy to do part-time work to keep making that happen. I did lots and lots of different jobs at the university, including driving a student night bus for many years. Then later on I did a Masters in Medieval British Studies. I got lucky there, because there was a scholarship, and I wouldn't have been able to do it without that because I didn't have any money. So, I got a scholarship because I did really well in my degree, and that meant I was in the running for Masters scholarships. And that went well. And then Bill Aird, who was my mentor and ended up being my PhD supervisor, was pushing me along. He said my undergraduate dissertation was publishable, with a bit of work. He believed in that and believed in me, and I ended up getting that published in the *Welsh History Review* with his support. And that, during my Masters year, got me

in the running for a British Academy PhD scholarship, which was incredibly competitive. But that publication, that was one of the factors, I think, that helped get me over the line for that. Initially they wrote to me and said, no, you haven't got it, but you did really well, so we'll keep you on the reserve list. And then bizarrely – you know, it's like fate, isn't it? – someone dropped out. I mean, who would do that? Drop out of their PhD scholarship? And I was next in line. That was just fluke, you know, just luck so many times. And so I got a scholarship to do a PhD, and at that point, then, maybe I started to think, well, yeah, I'd quite like to do this as a career. You know, maybe I could be an academic, maybe academia's got something for me. So when I finished my PhD, and I was in that state of precarity, I was applying to lots of departments, doing everything that everyone does now. And, you know, it's probably even harder now for a lot of academics, young academics. But one job that did come up was in the Centre for Lifelong Learning, which is the adult learner centre, open access pathways, in Cardiff. And I wanted that then. It was like, that's right, that's where I have to go because that's *me*. That's where I came from. I came through that route. So I went for that job. I had been doing some teaching for them as well, which meant that I'd done some adult learning teaching as well as some teaching undergraduates at postgraduate level. So I had some teaching experience, and that got me on to be the Coordinating Lecturer for the Centre for Lifelong Learning, which I was for six, seven years. I worked there and at the university, developing a range of things, including a university-wide induction for mature students because there wasn't one when I started. They used to have one in Bangor when I was there. It was brilliant, you know, they welcomed the mature students, but they didn't have anything in Cardiff, and it was a huge university compared to Bangor. So we did that, and that's still going. So a lot of things I've done I've tried to make sustainable. At that time, I also set up a free lecture series, open access lecture series, which then turned into the Exploring the Past lectures, and that's still going strong. Those early years were about opening up opportunities for others that I had had, and putting back into that positive cycle, and that culminated with setting up the Exploring the Past pathway. The pathway came out of a time of challenge and strife, because they were going to cut all of the humanities courses in the Centre for Lifelong Learning in 2009 for financial reasons. And I was part of a very high-profile campaign to save those courses with other colleagues and students. It was a really difficult time. I had a young baby on the way and stuff, but we did it. We did manage to save that provision. But one of the reasons why they couldn't cut it was, well, I said I'm developing these accessible routes that will have a pathway for adults to come onto Cardiff degrees. You can't cut

that, that's what the Welsh Government wants. And that turned out to be Exploring the Past. So they cut the humanities for a year, but said we'll grow them back, and then that was part of growing them back. And at that point, I moved into the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff, which was then just History and Archaeology. I was given this role by Professor Peter Coss, who's been a sort of mentor to me over the years. It was being a historian, but also half my job was to do adult learning and community engagement and community participation. So, I had this role that was made for me at that point, after going through all that strife, which was nice. And at that point, I developed an open access pathway onto degrees called Exploring the Past. It took me a year to get that going. I designed it, I delivered it, I taught courses on it. All the modules were designed around things that I knew, because I was an adult learner, would be needed or that would help people. And then I managed in 2013 to get a post to sustain it long term. It's been going now for fourteen years, and it's progressed 82 people – people who were like me in various different ways, or adult learners, anyway, all ages from twenty, twenty-one, up to people in their seventies and eighties – onto degrees. All people who didn't have those chances earlier in their lives. So, I'm super proud of that. And I can't claim all the credit for that, because people like Richard Marsden and especially Paul Webster, who's run it since 2015, have made it fly. So, that's very important for me. And, you know, it's about that, you know, a lot of those people don't get those opportunities. So my whole career, in a way, has gone through that strand of getting inspired, getting those opportunities that I didn't have, that then inspired me to research the past and discover new knowledge. Also, I'm not interested in top-down history, and a lot of medieval history is very top-down, it's kings and queens and the great people, and I'm not interested in that, really. So, that was another thing the archaeology tied me into, understanding what would be called ... I don't want to say 'ordinary' people, nobody's 'ordinary', but perhaps more working-class perspectives. That's where my interest in enslavement and exploitation, that sort of perspective, came in. So when I did manage to have success and get my PhD and stuff like that, I wanted to then repeat that positive cycle for other people. Initially, it was with adults because that was my experience. But later on, I developed into other things, and did a lot of work in schools where young people don't get much of a chance. My school was like that, really. So that's inspired my career to be trying to help other people to experience that kind of life-changing opportunity that higher education provides. All too often the marketization of higher education has left people thinking, oh, it's just about getting a job and getting your value for money and your degree so that you get

a job. And, yeah, it's always going to be about that a little bit. But for me, it wasn't about that. It was about, wow, look at this whole new world, look at these incredible people I'm getting to meet. It was about opening up opportunity in a whole range of ways, enriching my life, and to start with I didn't even think about where it was going to lead me career-wise. So, I don't know if that maybe has changed because of the marketization of higher education, and I understand that people have very much been pushed that way. But the joy of studying and learning is still something that we should be championing.

TL: *Those are really phenomenal achievements. This is exactly what higher education should do, it's actually given me goosebumps listening to you talk about that. And what you've spoken about shows so much about what drives you and the theme of your chapter, which is 'Taking History into the World'. Another way you've done that is through the CAER Heritage Project, which readers can find out more about through the chapter or through the recent podcast series on the project, but can you give us a taster here?*

DW: Yeah, yeah. So, CAER has been a massive part of my life, and still is, and will be in the future, I'm sure. CAER Heritage really came out of that period when I first got this job in the School of History, Archaeology, and Religion, which was fifty per cent a community engagement job. After I got the Exploring the Past pathway up and running, and I managed to get a post for that so it would be sustainable, I had a bit of time to do other things. And that's when CAER Heritage emerged. So, I found out about Caerau hillfort in the west of Cardiff. I'd driven through the west of Cardiff before. It's two very large social housing estates, housing 26,000 people, that face a lot of challenges in the postindustrial context. They were serviced by the major industries of the paper mill, a jam factory and a brewery and that all went in the seventies and eighties, and left a legacy of unemployment and many other challenges. But they've also got this incredible heritage. Those stories in themselves are quite important, and the stories of the housing estate, we've explored those. But, incredibly, on the fringe of these housing states, there's this huge monument, this Iron Age hillfort, which dates back to prehistory, to the time before the Romans arrived. And nobody's gone to explore this incredible archaeological site because of these estates, because of their reputation, which is founded on negative stereotypes. I found out about the hillfort initially, by just having a chat in a pub with someone about it. And I was interested in the community, so I knew that they had a lot of challenges. So, the fact that there was this incredible heritage site in these communities, I thought, well, that's quite interesting, you know. If that was in the middle of Cardiff or some other part of Cardiff, that would be a

tourist attraction, and there'd be money going into that. So that's kind of how it came about. And I bumped into archaeologist Olly Davis, and he, in a way, pitched the ideas of the CAER project, and I really liked it. So, we got together and went out to the communities, and he'd already been making some contacts. We were lucky that, on the ground, there was a major community development project just getting started that had come out of the Welsh Government Communities First initiative, and that's an anti-poverty government initiative. But, Action in Caerau and Ely (ACE) came out of that, saying, we don't want to be seen as communities that are for outsiders to come and fix, there's plenty of talent in these communities, there's plenty of knowledge, there's plenty of activism, there's friendship, there's love. You know, we can do something about the challenges we're facing ourselves. And that really tapped into the heritage, because, you know, here's this asset, here's this amazing community asset, this heritage site. No one's explored it. No one's done anything with it. There's no interpretation there, and yet it's probably the oldest and biggest monument in Cardiff, the capital city of Wales. So the two things came together, and we met with them (ACE) and with local residents and the local farmer, who owns the field where the archaeology is, and local teachers. We were in what was then Glyn Derw High School, which was a pretty run-down school. Now there's a beautiful new school there called Cardiff West. We still work really closely with them. But at that point, although I'd had this experience of doing lifelong learning, neither Olly nor I had really properly got any research funding or got any grants or anything. But we banged out three objectives at that meeting, which came from local people, which is what we're going to do with this site. And one of them was, let's discover the story of this place together. It was about discovering the past with everybody being involved, and that really appealed to me, given where I'd come from on my journey. And the second one was, through that process, let's create new life opportunities for everybody that gets involved. And, again, obviously, that kind of discovery led me into new opportunities, so I was really in tune with it. Then the third one was, let's challenge the negative stories that are told about these communities, which are all over the media, and yet there's so much positivity and so many inspiring things happening in those communities. And, you know, that's what telling a new story about the past was allowing us to do, because, interestingly, that monument and Caerau hillfort is really the original place. That's where the original Cardiff was before modern Cardiff emerged. *Now* those communities seem to be marginalized socially and economically, physically, they're on the edge of the city, but 2,500 years ago, those communities were at the heart of Cardiff and at the heart of decision-

making, and that's an interesting way to flip that narrative. So, yeah, the CAER project unfolded from that early meeting and those early objectives and values. A wonderful colleague, Victoria Rogers from the Cardiff Story Museum, she said something which I think is really, really great and I really identified with, which is you have to understand your past to know where you are in the present to shape your future. That sums up what CAER Heritage is about in a way. And it's led to a lot of things. We did a whole bunch of archaeological digs, which involved lots of people, but the nice thing about those communities is they have multiple layers of history and heritage, just as most communities do, and the monument was brilliant because it allowed for a focus on relics of the Iron Age. We found an amazing Roman story, and you can unpack some interesting things around that, around colonialism and imperialism. We also found – well, local people found, incredibly, beneath the Iron Age hillfort, a very rich, Neolithic, causewayed enclosure, and it's rich in material culture, and that made it internationally significant. Since then, we've discovered a Bronze Age village or settlement in Trelai Park, which is just half a mile away, so it's incredible, you know, the first ever house known in Cardiff, from 4,000 years ago. But we've also unpacked some of the modern stories, you know, and worked with some fab colleagues like Stephanie Ward, looking at the history of the social housing estate and looking at social housing as heritage. The Ely estate was one of the first proper social housing estates in the UK. It was the vision of the future at the time, with lovely planned streets and houses and parks, and it still has got lots of nice things like that going on. Unpacking how that came about in the wake of the First World War was a really interesting project where we did a little history, and we spoke to some of the original kids on the estate, now in their eighties, and that was very powerful as well. So it's been great because it's been like my career in a way; it's blended history and archaeology together, but we also have a medieval story, there's a medieval church on top of the hill, a really nice medieval church, and a little castle there, which is from probably the Cambro-Norman period, and that's kind of my period. Ultimately we managed to get a big lottery grant to build a lovely Heritage Centre, which now is a centre for learning and opportunity in those communities, and is also a place where we continue to discover the past together, and we use that discovery to create new knowledge about the past, to open up those opportunities. Ultimately that's what the project's about. A lot of that is covered in the podcast series, which I've just released, which tracks the journey of the project, so if anyone wants to find out more about CAER Heritage and how it evolved, how we built our expertise and our friendship and our trust in the community, that's all covered in five lovely podcast episodes.

One of the other really important things we did was work with artists and creatives, and it really opened up the project to a whole other side, which was how do we express these discoveries, and how do we help the whole community come together to create wonderful films and pieces of art that tell that new story.

TL: *One of the things that is so great about that story is it's literally starting out hearing something in a pub, then you and somebody else having some ideas, but you started out with no resources, nothing but the fact that there's this great archaeological site and an interest in doing something, and then it's just blossomed into this massive project over the past fourteen years, with so many different people involved. I think it will be really inspiring for anybody reading this interview to think that you've got willpower and an idea, you can build up a bit of knowledge, and work with people to create something together that's really enriching and sustaining and develops in all sorts of ways that you probably never could have envisaged at the beginning.*

DW: And key to that is just working with people, co-creating. We've learned that from our community development partners ACE. Most of what I've learned has been about community development work and how to involve people, and that's come from our community partners Action in Caerau and Ely, and they've taught us that. You know, if you read some of the quite well-meaning opinions and perspectives from historians that we need to engage more with the public and we need to think about our audiences and that kind of thing, I've always had a bit of a problem with that because that creates the sense that you are the one with the knowledge and you will bestow power, and having an audience, I'm not on a bloody stage talking to an audience. That's not what CAER's about. Local people know a lot of stuff, they bring a lot of knowledge about the local area and local community and the same can be applied across any context. It doesn't have to be around a place. You could be talking about intangible heritages of migrant communities, but there's still that knowledge there. But you have to build trust and build those equal reciprocal relationships with people. It's not about you coming in and knowing it all. But, actually, when you do that right, it does take time and effort, but it can inspire you and it can inspire a whole new way of looking. It opens up really rich and new histories and pasts, which are not top-down. And that's really important in our current society, with so much rampant inequality and narratives being controlled for particular means. But, you know, it's actually a joy to creatively take history and archaeology out into the world. It's one of the most rewarding things. And, like you say, you don't know what will happen. CAER Heritage is big now, but

it wasn't. We started out with an idea, and a few people were up for having a chat, and we always just rolled with it and just let everyone talk. If you've got the right value base, that's what's important. If you know what you're doing in terms of your values and what you want to achieve, and that's when you get those three points I talked about earlier. You know, discover the past together, make new life opportunities, new stories. When you've got that in place, other stuff can follow, you know. But always start not with what *you've* got and what *you* want, but what is the need, what is the community need, what is the participant need, what is the individual need of people you might want involved. They've got to come first. And then the other stuff will follow. So you put them first, and it'll work. And what's interesting is, and I think this is quite important, the university got interested in us as things were going on, but we didn't get any funding from the university for ages. We did get funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council, from its Connected Communities fund, because that was in tune with this co-creation strategy for a while. The university investment came later, when we'd already established ourselves and were winning awards. And now the university is starting to recognize that we're not just a little local history archaeology project to be patted on the head, because we're getting international interest in our co-creation strategies. I mean, the archaeology and history are internationally significant, or some of it is, but that's not what scholars across the globe are interested in. They're interested in the process, the process to how we discover that past, those values, places, that's what's important for the heritage. I mean, the outcomes are great, but it's the process of discovering that past together and celebrating it that brings people together, that helps communities that way. And we've had, just in recent years, we had a scholar from Delhi in India. Before that, we had someone come in from Chicago. We've had a delegation from Uganda. We've had a colleague in the Business School who's working in the European context, looking at public services and co-creation, and apparently the way that we're doing things, we didn't know this, rates really highly on the scale of co-creation. So, as our old colleague and friend Bill Jones always said, all history's local history, right? The local becomes, because of the way we're doing it, internationally significant. There are some amazing projects happening across the world, but you can actually do incredible projects on the doorstep of the university, and that's actually where they need to be doing projects as well, especially in South Wales, where we have a raft of poverty and inequality, and they can be internationally significant as well. So again, it flips that narrative a little bit. And it goes back to some of my history stuff as well, because one thing I always taught my students is that while many English-based historians see

Wales as a frontier on the west of Britain, on the fringe, that's a very Anglocentric perspective. You could take a very different perspective to that, you could look at Wales as part of a much bigger Viking Norse world that stretches across the North Atlantic, if you flip the map upside down. So, it is challenging some of those prevailing narratives around the ways that we view history, which are often shaped by assumptions and preconceived ideas.

TL: *That's very true. So, to move onto the last couple of questions ...*

What do you think has changed most about the student experience since you were an undergraduate?

DW: I think I touched on it earlier, didn't I? I think that marketization of higher education compared to when I started, when higher education seemed more about expanding your personal knowledge and skills. It wasn't necessarily seen as a route to employability, which has become necessary in a way because of that marketization, that price label that goes on it. And, you know, it's incredibly expensive. My son's going to university now, and so I get that. But I do think that has detracted from that more important goal of the university, which is about making people into caring, skilled, critical-thinking citizens. That is still there; we've got amazing students who get involved in CAER Heritage, and we've got modules where we embed some live aspects of projects, and then students actually stay on and continue to volunteer. But a lot of the culture of higher education is now driven by things like employability and driven by stuff around rankings and research. That whole culture has transformed, really, and not for the better, in my view. In some ways, some of the elite stuff's been eroded a bit, and that's been good. But that cultural side of it has changed a lot, and marketization has led, to some extent, to a devaluation of topics like history and archaeology. That's just ridiculous, because the humanities are about critical thinking, about humanity, about understanding each other and other people, and they allow us to do incredible things. But I also have hope, because I work all the time with amazing students. We've got currently a couple of interns, Muhammad and Izzy, who are setting up a youth forum for the entire area through CAER Heritage. They just inspire me all the time, and so I think there is a lot of hope, but it's a very challenging time.

TL: *And the very last question. Do you have a top tip for students today on getting the most out of studying history at university?*

DW: Throw yourself into it, do everything you can, enjoy it, pick up on every opportunity you can. Maybe it's not always possible to throw yourself into every opportunity, because you've got to focus on making that gamble pay off, and you maybe have caring duties or other stuff, but where possible, the key thing is to not worry too much about where it's going to lead you but enjoy it for what it is at the moment. If you can, use your subjects and the knowledge

that you learn all the time to do a little bit of taking history out into the world, maybe in small ways or large ways, whether you can get involved in some schools outreach, whether you can get involved in helping local communities discover their past with the skills that you've got. But throw yourself into it. Those things won't see you wrong, even if they don't end up leading to an amazing career, they will enrich you in your life, and you will learn things about people, so there's a lot that can be done with our subjects in the world, and that can help people, and at the moment, you know, there's a lot of unhealthy, negative narratives about history and archaeology, which can be challenged, you know, through that sort of evidence-based knowledge and through working with people positively and co-creatively about their pasts, and that's what I would encourage any students to do.

TL: Thanks Dave, it's been great talking to you.

You can find out more about some of the projects discussed here by listening to the CAER Heritage Podcast (produced by the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement): <https://www.publicengagement.ac.uk/caer-heritage-podcast>