

An Introduction to Running Maritime Archaeological Projects

Designing – Planning – Delivering – Analysing



Helping Hand – Lawrenny, South Wales.

Ian Cundy

Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

An Introduction to Running Maritime Archaeological Projects

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Also, by Ian Cundy (MADU):

An Illustrated Glossary of Wooden Ship and Boat Terminology

An Introduction to Running Maritime Archaeological Projects

Designing – Planning – Delivering – Analysing



Ian Cundy



Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

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Research & text: Ian Cundy

Design: Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

Photographs (unless otherwise stated): Ian Cundy

First Printing: 2021

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Cover: Students recording the intertidal remains of the *Helping Hand* at Lawrenny, Pembrokeshire, South Wales.

Inside the front cover: Discussions regarding the day's plan for diving the protected wreck site of the *Iona II* Paddle Steamer off of Lundy Island.
(Courtesy: Lynn Jones)

Rear cover: A morning briefing during an underwater project to investigate the remains of the *SS Leysian* at Abercastle, Pembrokeshire, South Wales.
(Courtesy: Peta Knott)

Contents.	Page.
Photographs & Illustrations.	
Preface.	
Introduction.	1
1. What is a Project?	3
1.1 Archaeological Projects.	6
1.2 Maritime Archaeological Projects.	7
2. An Idea!	9
3. Designing.	9
3.1 Who.	11
3.1.1 Who is your project for?	
3.1.2 Who might it be worth inviting to join the project?	
3.1.3 Who has something that might contribute to the project?	
3.1.4 Who will benefit from the project?	
3.2 What.	12
3.2.1 What is already known about this site or subject?	
3.2.2 What aspects of the site or subject are you particularly interested in?	
3.2.3 What are the Project's Goals? (Project's Aims).	
3.2.4 What will you need to do to achieve the Project's Aims? (Project's Objectives).	
3.3 Why.	16
3.3.1 Why are you interested in taking on this project?	
3.3.2 Why this site?	
3.3.3 Why now?	
3.4 Where.	17
3.4.1 Where is the site?	
3.5 When.	18
3.5.1 When do you plan to undertake this project?	

4.	Planning.	19
4.1	Personnel.	20
4.2	The Site.	23
4.2.1	Site Visit:	23
4.2.2	Site Condition Assessment:	24
4.2.3	Feasibility Study:	26
4.2.4	Planning an Underwater Project:	27
4.2.5	Planning an In-water Project:	28
4.2.6	Planning an On-water Project:	29
4.2.7	Planning an Off-shore Project:	31
4.2.8	Planning an Intertidal & Coastal Project:	33
4.2.9	Planning an Inland Project:	35
4.2.10	Planning an Aerial Project:	37
4.3	The Location.	41
4.3.1	Health & Safety:	41
4.3.2	Security:	42
4.4	The Work.	43
4.4.1	Monitoring:	43
4.4.2	Recording:	45
4.4.3	Surveying:	47
4.4.4	Excavation:	49
4.4.5	Recovery:	51
4.4.6	Desk Based Project Work:	52
4.4.7	Education & Training:	52
4.5	Administration.	53
4.5.1	Code of Practice:	53
4.5.2	Risk Assessment:	56
4.5.3	Funding & Sponsorship:	60
4.5.4	Stationary:	62
4.5.5	Merchandising:	62
4.5.6	Database:	63
4.5.7	Forms:	64

5. Delivering.	66
5.1 Pre-project.	66
5.1.1 Publicity:	66
5.1.2 Bookings:	68
5.1.3 Joining Information:	70
5.1.4 Communications:	71
5.1.5 Kit:	71
5.2 A Typical Day.	72
5.2.1 Weather & Shipping Forecasts:	72
5.2.2 Morning Briefings:	72
5.2.3 Training:	73
5.2.4 Site Work:	74
5.2.5 Collation & Analysis of Data:	80
5.2.6 Evening de-briefings:	82
5.2.7 Diary up-dates, Blogs, Social-Media, etc.	82
5.2.8 Evening Events & Activities:	83
5.2.9 Desk Based Projects:	84
5.3 Plan "B" Days.	85
5.3.1 Training:	86
5.3.2 Off-Site Activities:	88
5.3.3 Practical Activities:	88
5.3.4 Slightly More Frivolous Activities:	88
5.4 Other Days.	89
5.4.1 Holistic Days:	89
5.4.2 Open Days:	89
5.4.3 Press Days:	90
5.4.4 Final Days:	92
6. Analysing.	93
6.1 Post-Processing.	93
6.1.1 Artefacts:	93
6.1.2 Collating Site Data:	95
6.1.3 Evaluating Site Data:	96
6.1.4 Processing Photographs & Editing Videos:	96
6.1.5 Consulting Specialists:	97

6.2	Dissemination.	98
6.2.1	Reports:	98
6.2.2	Outreach:	99
6.2.3	Publishing:	101
6.3	Archiving.	102
6.3.1	Documentation:	102
6.3.2	Artefacts:	103
6.4	Final Analysis.	104
6.4.1	Questions:	104
6.4.2	Reflections:	105
	Notes.	107
	Further Reading.	108
	Index.	110

Photographs & Illustrations.

Page.

1. What is a Project?

<i>Fig. 1. A NAS bag.</i>	3
<i>Fig. 2. A shelf in the MADU office.</i>	4
<i>Fig. 3. Broughton Bay & Whiteford Sands.</i>	5
<i>Fig. 4. All Archaeological Projects start with having a Bloody Good Idea! and end with a Group Photograph and a Modest Celebration.</i>	6

2. The Idea!

<i>Fig. 5. Interrogate your Idea to see if it is likely to fly!</i>	9
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3. Designing:

<i>Fig. 6. Ask yourself, is this a good Idea?</i>	10
<i>Fig. 7. Billy no mates!</i>	11
<i>Fig. 8. Surveying a ship's hulk.</i>	12
<i>Fig. 9. Library research.</i>	13
<i>Fig. 10. The remains of a vessel being recorded.</i>	15
<i>Fig. 11. A Lockheed P-38 Lightning emerging from beneath the sands.</i>	16
<i>Fig. 12. Local Maps, Charts and Global Perspectives.</i>	17
<i>Fig. 13. A post Covid-19 calendar?</i>	18
<i>Fig. 14. An intertidal vessel being gradually washed away with each tide.</i>	18

4. Planning:

<i>Fig. 15. Thorough Project Planning is essential, remember the 6 Ps.</i>	19
<i>Fig. 16. Tide Timetables, Weather & Shipping Charts.</i>	21
<i>Fig. 17. Artefacts being drawn.</i>	22
<i>Fig. 18. An artistic impression of the SS 'Leysian' when it wrecked in 1917.</i>	22 *
<i>Fig. 19. An underwater site being inspected during a pre-project Site Visit.</i>	23
<i>Fig. 20. Example of a Feasibility, or Scoping Study.</i>	26
<i>Fig. 21. A technical diver preparing to dive from a commercial dive boat.</i>	27
<i>Fig. 22. Using a total station on land to record underwater sites.</i>	28
<i>Fig. 23. An Aquascope in use, inspecting underwater site features.</i>	28
<i>Fig. 24. A small hard boat being used with Geophysical Equipment.</i>	29 *
<i>Fig. 25. An ROV sonar image of the prop shaft and frames of a wreck.</i>	30
<i>Fig. 26. Boats suitable for running projects in coastal waters.</i>	31
<i>Fig. 27. The Research Vessel 'Prince Madog'.</i>	32
<i>Fig. 28. Recording & surveying an Intertidal wreck.</i>	33

<i>Fig. 29. Using a Plane Table and a Total Station at Coastal Sites.</i>	33
<i>Fig. 30. The wreck of the 'Helvetia'.</i>	34
<i>Fig. 31. A submerged forest.</i>	34
<i>Fig. 32. Sea defences.</i>	34
<i>Fig. 33. Examples of Industrial Maritime Heritage.</i>	35
<i>Fig. 34. Examples of Inland Maritime sites.</i>	36
<i>Fig. 35. LiDAR image of Bardsey Island.</i>	37
<i>Fig. 36. A light aircraft for use with LiDAR.</i>	37
<i>Fig. 37. Using a camera on a pole, or flying from a kite.</i>	38
<i>Fig. 38. Using a camera and monitoring progress from a ladder.</i>	38
<i>Fig. 39. An aerial view taken from this microlite.</i>	39
<i>Fig. 40. An aerial view taken from this hot air balloon.</i>	39
<i>Fig. 41. An aerial view taken from this radio-controlled helicopter.</i>	40
<i>Fig. 42. An aerial view taken from this drone.</i>	40
<i>Fig. 43. Coast Guard officers searching for the remains of ordinance.</i>	41
<i>Fig. 44. Be aware of accepted customs in other countries.</i>	42
<i>Fig. 45. Underwater cameras, and an intertidal site being photographed.</i>	43
<i>Fig. 46. Contrasting pictures of a wreck site, taken a few months apart.</i>	44
<i>Fig. 47. Examples of 1m & 0.5m scales, and credit card size scales.</i>	45
<i>Fig. 48. The author sketching a wreck.</i>	46
<i>Fig. 49. A planning frame being used to record a wreck.</i>	46
<i>Fig. 50. The underwater environment being recorded.</i>	46
<i>Fig. 51. A record of the local geological strata.</i>	46
<i>Fig. 52. Divers using tapes to survey.</i>	47 *
<i>Fig. 53. Surveying on the foreshore, using a Dumpy Level and Staff.</i>	47
<i>Fig. 54. Surveying using a Total Station and a Plain Table.</i>	47
<i>Fig. 55. A 1m probing rod being used to identify a buried wreck.</i>	48
<i>Fig. 56. Various types of geophysical equipment being used on land sites.</i>	48
<i>Fig. 57. Example of a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) being used.</i>	49
<i>Fig. 58. Typical hand and mechanical excavation.</i>	49
<i>Fig. 59. The blunt and sharp end of excavation using a water dredge.</i>	50
<i>Fig. 60. The excavated walls of Roman warehousing.</i>	50
<i>Fig. 61. A broken Amphora awaiting recovery, and cleaning pottery.</i>	51
<i>Fig. 62. Working on-line, at home, in libraries and in archives.</i>	52
<i>Fig. 63. Practicing tape surveys, and learning how to use a total station.</i>	52
<i>Fig. 64. The NAS Approved Code of Diving Practice.</i>	53
<i>Fig. 65. Divers performing a Buddy Check before a dive.</i>	54
<i>Fig. 66. Working on a muddy intertidal site on a very wet and windy day.</i>	55

<i>Fig. 67. Some risks are easy to identify and to mitigate.</i>	56
<i>Fig. 68. Examples of well known Logos.</i>	62
<i>Fig. 69. A smartly turned-out project team, and unsuccessful marketing!</i>	62
<i>Fig. 70. Integrated dataset from the Mary Rose (1545) site in the Site Recorder program.</i>	63
<i>Fig. 71. Keeping the project's admin. up-to-date is of major importance.</i>	63
<i>Fig. 72. Generated forms, tailored to the project's specific needs.</i>	64
<i>Fig. 73. Completing site notes following a dive off Sidon, Lebanon.</i>	65

5. Delivering:

<i>Fig. 74. Flyers seeking help with research, and bi-lingual project invites.</i>	67
<i>Fig. 75. Talks to clubs, and presentations to organisations.</i>	67
<i>Fig. 76. A simple table top exhibition display.</i>	68
<i>Fig. 77. A typical set of Joining Instructions for an Underwater Project.</i>	70
<i>Fig. 78. Some of the project's equipment likely to be required.</i>	71
<i>Fig. 79. A Morning Briefing, setting the tone for the day.</i>	73 *
<i>Fig. 80. Running practical & theoretical training courses during a project.</i>	73 *
<i>Fig. 81. Pictures depicting a day on site during an Inland Project.</i>	74-75
<i>Fig. 82. Pictures depicting a day on site during an Intertidal Project.</i>	76-77
<i>Fig. 83. Pictures depicting a day on site during an Underwater Project.</i>	78-79 *
<i>Fig. 84. Recording sheets can often contain vital pieces of information!</i>	80
<i>Fig. 85. Examples of data that will need to be collated and analysed.</i>	81
<i>Fig. 86. Social-Media Logos.</i>	82
<i>Fig. 87. Evening Events & Activities.</i>	83 *
<i>Fig. 88. A talk about your project for local residents would be good PR.</i>	83 *
<i>Fig. 89. A Desk-Based Project doesn't have to be a solitary exercise.</i>	84
<i>Fig. 90. Reports from an on-line volunteer research Desk-Based Project.</i>	84
<i>Fig. 91. Unwelcome images, when hoping to work on site.</i>	85 *
<i>Fig. 92. Perfecting survey techniques in a dry environment.</i>	86
<i>Fig. 93. Examples of possible Plan "B" Training Days.</i>	87 *
<i>Fig. 94. Researching local church records.</i>	88 *
<i>Fig. 95. Photographing a Protected Wreck.</i>	88
<i>Fig. 96. Add your own caption!</i>	88
<i>Fig. 97. Taking a holistic view of your site.</i>	89 *
<i>Fig. 98. A site information base.</i>	90 *
<i>Fig. 99. The Media recording for the following day's TV news broadcasts.</i>	90
<i>Fig. 100. Work with the media, but be careful!</i>	91
<i>Fig. 101. An underwater site, 'As Left'.</i>	92

<i>Fig. 102. The group's photograph, and clearing the site.</i>	92 *
<i>Fig. 103. Examples of dealing with Artefacts.</i>	94
<i>Fig. 104. Some of the miscellaneous material that a project will generate.</i>	95
<i>Fig. 105. The Post Processing of data.</i>	96
<i>Fig. 106. Examples of stills and side-scan images.</i>	96
<i>Fig. 107. Metallurgical analysis being carried out on ship's sheathing.</i>	97
<i>Fig. 108. Dendrochronology being carried out on ship's timbers.</i>	97
<i>Fig. 109. Examples of Project Reports.</i>	98
<i>Fig. 110. Logos of the four UK Historic Environment Record Archives.</i>	99
<i>Fig. 111. A leaflet for The Bronze Bell (Tal-y-Bont) Shipwreck.</i>	100
<i>Fig. 112. Chose the location for your Information Board with great care.</i>	100
<i>Fig. 113. Information about your project can be hidden for others to find.</i>	100
<i>Fig. 114. Newspapers, Newsletters, Books, etc.</i>	101
<i>Fig. 115. Beware using obsolete data storage methods for archiving.</i>	102
<i>Fig. 116. The Bronze Bell Museum and the National Maritime Museum.</i>	103
<i>Fig. 117. A WWII Spitfire's instrument panel as found, and on display.</i>	103
6. Analysing:	
<i>Fig. 118. Example of a Project's Feedback Questionnaire.</i>	104
<i>Fig. 119. The author contemplating the errors of his ways!</i>	105
<i>Fig. 120. Dusk over tranquil water in Myanmar – 2016.</i>	106

Acknowledgments: Some of the photographs contained in this book may contain your image, possibly from when you attended an organised course, a field school or project. Some of the photographs may even have been taken by you (as denoted * above). Where known, we have endeavoured to credit you as the author, however if there are any omissions that need to be corrected, do, please, contact the author, and every effort will be made to rectify any oversights.

To everyone the author has met on sites, on-line, and in classrooms, between you, you have provided the inspiration for this book, which we hope others will benefit from, and your contribution is very much appreciated.

Preface.

This book is predominantly aimed at the amateur avocational maritime archaeologist, but it will also hopefully be of interest to the established professional and terrestrial archaeologists.

As a boat builder for 30 years, working in the marine industry from land was something I took for granted. However, following the night our company's floating workshop foundered, rolled over, and sank, I became a diver! As a diver, it was only time, before I encountered the Nautical Archaeology Society, and my interest in maritime archaeology was duly wetted.

It also didn't take many site visits, helping other people with their projects, actually, only two (one intertidal and one underwater), before **An Idea!** took hold. The Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU) was conceived, and we were up-and-running with our own projects.

Our first endeavour came about following discussions with a group of WWII Spitfire enthusiasts, and developed into an underwater project, searching for the remains of a Spitfire, known as the *Silver Gray*. The pilot had been forced to ditch, just short of the beach at Bexhill when returning home from a mission on the other side of the English Channel in 1941.

Together with the local Rother Diving Club, boys and girls from the Bexhill Air Cadets, and an assortment of friends and acquaintances, we managed to amass a team of around 40 divers and helpers. With a motley flotilla of 5 boats, and amazingly, some funding amounting to £1,135, we mounted an 8-day event, by the end of which we had found absolutely nothing! Our presence however, inspired local residents to donate dozens of miscellaneous Spitfire parts that they had collected over the years while walking the beach.

This experience, along with a subsequent quarter of a century running other projects, has taught us a lot, and our hope is that some of the experience MADU has gained over the years is conveyed within the pages of this book, and is of assistance to others looking to run their own projects.

An overview of the projects that MADU have been involved with can be found on our website at: www.madu.org.uk

Introduction.

When attempting to put together a “how to” instruction book, that endeavours to help and encourage people to undertake Maritime Archaeological Projects of their own, you quickly come to realise that no two sites are the same. The inference from this is that, as there are an infinite variety of sites out there, each having their own dedicated set of challenges, every site will require its own bespoke and personally tailored approach, in order to fully understand what the site has to offer.

The consequence of this, is that any efforts to explain how to manage projects in a precise manner is going to be both impossible, and pointless! All this book can therefore hope to achieve, is to try and offer some profound suggestions on how it might be possible to run a project in general terms. It will then be down to you and your project team, to shape and fashion these thoughts, comments and ideas to suit the specific circumstances surrounding your site and your individual project’s agenda.

The format of the book starts with having **An Idea!** and then develops, step-by-step, through:

Designing – Planning – Delivering – Analysing

Each of these phases branches out, like a family tree, introducing further sub-headings as the project evolves. As a guide to where you are in the book, and where you are in the project’s evolution, each of the main sections has a “family tree” of the project’s development duplicated at the top of the principal pages.

If you come across any errors or contradictions in the pages of the book, or you have additional thoughts and ideas that may help others as they set out to run their projects, do please contact the author. This book is printed on demand, so revisions, corrections, and additional information can easily be incorporated in future print runs. Contact details can be found on our web site at:

www.madu.org.uk

The author hopes that you find this publication of assistance in whatever archaeological discipline or diverse tributary of maritime adventures your project takes you, and we wish you every success with your endeavours.

Ian Cundy (Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit)

1. What is a Project?

Every project starts with **An Idea!** and if you then decide to take this thought through to fruition, you will almost certainly have worked through four simple processes:

Designing – Planning – Delivering – Analysing

Everything we do in our day-to-day life can be considered to be a project. We all undertake projects every day, they might be carried out sub-consciously, and they will obviously not always be Archaeological, or even have a Maritime component, but in their small way, they can still be considered to be projects,

Let's look at the following example:

An Idea: You would like (or need) to go shopping.

Designing: You might ask yourself:

- **Who** will you go with?
- **What** would you like (or need) to buy?
- **Why** do you need these items?
- **Where** will you need to go to purchase these items?
- **When** will you undertake this activity?

Planning: You might consider:

- Inviting someone to join you.
- Making a list of the shopping to buy.
- What you will do with the items you buy.
- How you will get to and from the various shops.
- When the best time will be to set off.

Delivering: You go shopping, make your purchases, return home, and put the things you have bought away.

Analysing: You sit down to contemplate how much things cost! and how much you have spent!

This is a simple example, of something that we carry out normally without much thought, but in reality, it is actually a small project.



Fig. 1. A NAS bag.

Let's look at another example, but this time, one that is often referred to as a project. A Do-it-Yourself (DIY) Project:

An Idea: You would like an additional shelf in your office.

Designing: You might ask yourself:

- **Who** will use it?
- **What** will you put on it?
- **Why** do you need it?
- **Where** will it be fitted?
- **When** do you need it?

Planning: You might consider:

- How large & strong it needs to be.
- What materials it needs to be made from.
- How much you are prepared to spend.
- Whether to undertake the work yourself, or find someone else to carry out the work on your behalf?

Delivering: You go to your local DIY store and purchase everything you need to make and fit the shelf, and get on with the work. Alternatively, you get a quote and instruct someone else to take on the work.

Analysing: You stand back and admire your handiwork. Alternatively, you complain about the shoddy workmanship but inevitably pay the extortionately overpriced bill.



Fig. 2. A shelf in the MADU office.

Finally, let's think about something that takes a little more organising, as would be the case when taking on an Archaeological Project:

An Idea: You would like to go on holiday.

Designing: You might ask yourself:

- **Who** would you like to come with you?
- **What** sort of holiday are you interested in?
- **Why** do you need to do this?
- **Where** would you like to go?
- **When** would you like to go?

Planning: You might consider:

- Your budget.
- Undertaking all the organisation yourself?
- Visiting your local travel agent, and letting them arrange everything for you?

Delivering: You involve yourself with booking flights, accommodation, purchasing sun tan lotion, etc.
Alternatively, you choose a holiday from a glossy brochure, and instruct a travel agent to make all the arrangements.
When the time for the holiday comes around, you set off and endeavour to enjoy the experience.

Analysing: You look through your holiday photographs, wistfully reminiscing about the great time you had.
Alternatively, you may wish you had purchased a more comprehensive travel insurance policy, and taken with you something that might have relieved diarrhoea!



Fig. 3. Broughton Bay & Whiteford Sands. (Gower Peninsula, South Wales)

1.1 Archaeological Projects.

*Fig. 4. All Archaeological Projects start with having a **Bloody Good Idea!***



(Image: Dyfed Archaeological Trust)



*and end with a **Group Photograph,***

*and a **Modest Celebration!***

The rest of this book is all about the bits between having **An Idea** and taking the **Group Photograph**, the:

Designing – Planning – Delivering – Analysing

If you like what you have seen so far, copies of this paperback book
are available from the Nautical Archaeology Society at:

<https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/pages/shop/department/books>

and from the Go Dive scuba store at:

<https://www.godive.net/categories/books-dvds/>

with a RRP of £12.50 (plus £2.60 p&p – UK mainland)

Reviews:

“A good guide. - it is so interesting, a great read.” – [Jane Maddocks](#)