

Archaeology

Jersey is an island rich in archaeological evidence created by generation upon generation of human activity. The archaeological collection, which comprises material collected over the past 160 years, reflects this fascinating story of Jersey's human past. Among the collection are artefacts not just of local importance but of great national interest. It is the only public collection of archaeological material relating to the island.

The Palaeolithic Period 250,000 -10,000 BC

An important element of the collection comes from the site of La Cotte de Ste Brelade, which is one of Europe's most important archaeological sites. Excavations spanning one hundred years have revealed a stratified sequence of Lower and Middle Palaeolithic deposits. The key finds were thirteen Neanderthal Teeth and a piece of child's skull, as well as bones of woolly mammoths and rhinos. About 100,000 flints have been recovered from the site.



La Cotte de ste Brelade

The Mesolithic Period 10,000-4,800

The Mesolithic period is represented in the collection by only a few unstratified flint assemblages.

The Neolithic Period 4,850-2,850 BC

The evidence from the Neolithic period comprises the bulk of the archaeology collection and is heavily dominated by the artefacts recovered from the island's important series of



megalithic monuments which were excavated from as early as the mid 19th century and

continue to the present day. The great wealth of material includes pottery, flint and other stone implements, human skeletal remains, querns and polished stone axes, many of which were produced from exotic stones

La Hougue Bie, Jersey's largest passage grave, discovered and excavated in 1924 and more recently between 1991 -1996 when the original entrance façade was exposed

The Chalcolithic Period 2,850 - 2,250 BC

Bell beakers, flints including barbed and tanged arrowheads, wristguards and whetstones most commonly feature in the Chalcolithic artefacts in the collection.

The Bronze Age 2,250 - 800 BC

There are relatively few Bronze Age finds from Jersey. The collection consists of pottery, worked stone and four major metalwork finds, three Late Bronze Age hoards and the famous gold torque from St Helier found in 1889.



The Iron Age 800 - 55BC

Few Iron Age sites have been dug in Jersey, as a result the period is not well represented in the collection. The most important finds in Jersey have been pottery and coin hoards from the first century BC, comprising thousands of coins from the Gaulish Coriosolites tribe, some interesting Durtrigian types, as well as jewellery and a number of unusual gold coins. Roman Period 55BC - 400AD

This collection of Roman finds is extremely small compared with other periods. It includes mostly pottery and coins as well as a number of small finds such as a gaming piece, a fibula and beads. There is no evidence for a Roman invasion or military presence in the island.

The Dark Ages 400AD - 933AD

Unfortunately at present the archaeological evidence from this period is rather sparse

Medieval Period

A substantial collection of pottery, clay pipes, glass, coinage as well as bone and metal objects have been collected over the years from a variety of sites including domestic dwellings and the island's fortifications.

Any enquiries relating to the archaeology collections can be made by contacting Olga Finch, Curator of Archaeology
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