



## Association of British Forensic Anthropology Bulletin

# ab FAB

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### In this issue >>>>>

Message from the Chair

Get Involved

Upcoming Events,  
Training and Jobs

BAFA Conference  
Announcement

BAFA Winter  
Conference Review

### BAFA ONLINE

Please let us know if there is any specific content that you would like to see added to the website or the newsletter

You can find us at...

[www.bafa.uk](http://www.bafa.uk)



@BAFA\_info



@BAFA.UK



British Association for  
Forensic Anthropology

## Message from the Chair

Hello BAFA Members,

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2023. I hope the year has been kind to you all so far.

In this edition of ab Fab we have some important announcements about the new BAFA small grants scheme, as well as our first ever face to face conference as an independent association.

2023 promises to be a busy year for forensic anthropologists as the number of cases across the UK remains high. Requests for practitioners to provide expert witness testimony have also increased, emphasising the need for us to maintain and demonstrate our professional competencies. On a related note, the Statutory Powers for the Forensic Science Regulator (FSR) are likely to be in place and enforceable by March 2023. This will give the FSR the power to launch investigations, issue compliance notices, and prohibit experts from being used, if they don't comply with the new statutory code. Whilst forensic anthropology is not currently included in the code, this may change in the future, and we must still ensure that we are working within similarly rigorous frameworks.

Internationally, we have witnessed tragedy on a vast scale with tens of thousands of deaths resulting from the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. I have been liaising closely with UK DVI regarding potential forensic anthropology deployments, but as yet there has been no request for assistance. In January I had the privilege of being invited to speak at both HM Coroners' DVI Event, and the Royal Society of Medicine DVI conference. This gave me an opportunity to raise the profile of forensic anthropology and illustrate how we can utilise our skills to assist in both domestic and international mass fatality incidents.

In terms of research and development I am pleased to announce the establishment of a new Forensic Research Institute, led by Professor Caroline Wilkinson, at Liverpool John Moores University. The BAFA committee would love to hear about the research activities taking place in your own organisations, so please do keep us and the wider BAFA membership informed.

I hope that you enjoy this edition of ab Fab, and I look forward to seeing lots of you at the conference in April! With very best wishes,

Julie

Chair of BAFA

# Get involved

## Invitation to apply for BAFA committee posts

We would like to invite expressions of interest from BAFA members for the following BAFA committee positions:

- Commercial Officer
- Academic R&D Officer

Details of the roles and responsibilities of these posts can be found on the BAFA website <http://www.bafa.uk/committee.html>  
BAFA members with the following experience are eligible to apply:

**Commercial Officer:** Applicants for this role must be regularly undertaking commercial forensic anthropology casework in the UK. They should also have a good working knowledge of how forensic service providers operate within the UK criminal justice system.

**Academic Research and Development Officer:** Applicants for this role must have completed their degree programmes and be working full or part time in Higher Education. They should have a successful track record in research, and the desire to promote collaborative applied research projects.

Both roles require a motivated person with sufficient time to fully commit to the role. As well as specific duties this includes assisting with production of the BAFA Newsletter, posting communications on the BAFA website and social media platforms, helping to organise and contribute to BAFA meetings and events. To express your interest in one of the above positions, please complete this Google Form by 5pm on Friday the 24th of March 2023: <https://forms.gle/AZZD8kHgFcTZcVPWA> providing your contact details and a paragraph of approximately 200-400 words describing yourself and what you think you could bring to the role. We will collate all responses and if needed hold elections in late March 2023. For any queries please email [secretary@BAFA.UK](mailto:secretary@BAFA.UK).

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Linda and Paige for all their hard work on the committee, and their continuing support for BAFA.

## New Journal FAAE – Call for submissions

Forensic Archaeology, Anthropology and Ecology is a journal that specialises in the inter-relationship between forensic anthropology, forensic archaeology and environmental forensic science in terms of research and forensic practice. The journal covers all aspects of anthropology applied to medico-legal or humanitarian investigations, the application of archaeological methods and theory to forensic practice and more.

A wide range of subject areas are welcomed, including geophysical methods, post-mortem interval, trauma and pathology, heritage crime, taphonomy, environmental scene sampling, entomology, mass grave investigations amongst others, and case studies ranging from WWI onwards.

FAAE publishes specially commissioned review papers, research papers which report new methods or techniques, as well as case studies.

<https://journal.equinoxpub.com/FAAE/about>

## Grants and Prizes

**BAFA:** We are pleased to announce that we are now in a financial position to offer a number of small grants and prizes to BAFA members:

- Research Grant - £500
- CPD Grant - £200
- Essay Prize - £200

Further details to be announced in April 2023, including criteria and how to apply. There may also be some supported places available for contributors at the spring conference

**RAI:** The RAI Biological Anthropology Small Grant Scheme provides grants for research in biological anthropology. Preference will be given to those applications which lie within human population biology, human genetics, human ethology, and palaeoanthropology. Full details can be found here <https://www.therai.org.uk/awards/research-grants/rai-biological-anthropology-small-grant-scheme>

# Upcoming Events, Training and Jobs

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

### April 2023

- 29<sup>th</sup> April BAFA Coventry, England

### June 2023

- 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> June BAHID <http://www.bahid.org/> - Moreton-in-Marsh, England

### Aug 2023

- 30<sup>th</sup> Aug – 1<sup>st</sup> Sep FASE <https://forensicanthropology.eu/save-the-date/> - Marseille, France

### Sep 2023

- Date TBC but normally Sep BABAO <https://www.babao.org.uk/conferences/future-babao-conferences/> - London, England
- 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> Sep EMFA <https://www.comunidad.madrid/en/servicios/justicia/11th-european-meeting-on-forensic-archaeology> Madrid, Spain

### Nov 2023

- 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Nov IAFS <https://iafs2023.com.au/> - Sydney, Australia

## OTHER EVENTS AND TRAINING

### RAI Film Festival

For those of you who are also interested in social anthropology.....The RAI Film festival is being held from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2023. It features 80 ground-breaking documentaries from around the world. Fees are as follows

- £90 for RAI Fellows and Members
- £45 for Concessions (students, unemployed (including Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit) and retired persons aged 65+)
- £30 for Delegates with low income from Low Income countries (<https://g2lm-lic.iza.org/call-phase-iv/list-of-lic/>)

Paying the conference fee will automatically give you access to the online film festival (3 – 31 March 2023) and to the in-person film festival (22 – 25 March 2023) which will be held in Bristol (UK).

Further details can be found at: [RAI FILM Festival | Home](#)

### Professional Training Courses

Alecto Forensic Services (AFS) are offering the following CPD courses:

- Human Skeletal Anatomy and Comparative Anatomy
- Recognising, Excavating and Recording Clandestine Graves
- Surface Dispersal of Human Remains

The courses are approved by the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences and on completion the participant will be awarded 8 continuing professional development (CPD) points.

Fees for the courses are:

- Professionals - £225
- **CifA/RAI/BAFA affiliated - 15% discount - £191.25**
- Students - £150

For further information and to book a place on a course, please contact the AFS Training and Events team at [training@forensic-access-group.co.uk](mailto:training@forensic-access-group.co.uk)

## JOBS

[ID Laboratory Scientist – Cellmark](#)

[Forensic Case Administrator - Cellmark](#)

[Exhibit Handler/Administrator – Cellmark](#)

[Customer Services Administrator](#)

[ICRC](#) open-ended contracts for forensic anthropologists with a min of 6 yrs and 8yrs experience (for regular and senior positions respectively)

[Forensic Archaeologist – ICMP, Kyiv](#)

# BAFA Conference Announcement



We are delighted to be hosting our in-person Spring 2023 conference in Coventry on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

Coventry University is a forward-looking, modern university with a proud tradition as a provider of high-quality education and a focus on applied research. The University forms an integral part of our city with over 20 buildings on the main 33-acre site in Coventry city centre. We have chosen to hold this year's in-person conference in Coventry, given its fairly UK-central location, with good transport (road and rail) links.

The conference will involve a range of invited speakers, student posters and presentations, plus a CPD workshop focussed on trauma analysis and reporting. The conference will span one-day, with tea/coffee and lunch included, plus an optional social event in the evening (details TBC).

We look forward to welcoming you in April! Further details will be announced on the BAFA website and social media platforms shortly. Keep an eye out for registration links!



Coventry University Technology Park



DO YOU WANT TO FEATURE YOUR RESEARCH OR HIGHLIGHT THE WORK OF YOUR DEPARTMENT OR UNIVERSITY IN THE NEWSLETTER?

In future issues of the BAFA newsletter we will feature some of the research by our members and highlight the research carried out in departments and universities in the UK and internationally.

Interested to write a piece for the newsletter? Won an award? Publications or funding opportunities you wish to highlight?

Please contact us for any academic enquiries at: [ACADEMIC@BAFA.UK](mailto:ACADEMIC@BAFA.UK)

Student Reps can contact Conner Welty at: [STUDENT@BAFA.UK](mailto:STUDENT@BAFA.UK)

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

You will shortly be receiving in an email to update your membership information and pay your fees for 2023 so please look out for an email from our membership secretary, Amy Rattenbury. If you haven't received this before the end of March then please get in touch directly at [membership@bafa.uk](mailto:membership@bafa.uk)

# BAFA Winter Conference Review

Saturday 10th December 2022 BAFA hosted their Winter Conference on “Vicarious Trauma and Mental Health in Forensic Anthropology.” Distinguished keynote speakers were invited to present on this topic, with a particular focus on bridging the gap between academia and practice.

The first speaker, Dr Sarah Ellingham, discussed "Occupational Trauma in First Responders" where she broke down types of traumatic stress and exposure. Dr Ellingham discussed ways in which we can mitigate occupational trauma risks and build resilience. These include pre-deployment briefings, reality based training, and post deployment follow up. "Awareness, preparedness, and close follow up are key."

This was followed by a joint presentation by Dr Claire McIntosh and Rebecca Reid (PhD, Cert FA III) from the University of Dundee: "Incorporating wellbeing and resilience building into a forensic curriculum." In their presentation, Rebecca discussed a recent survey of forensic anthropologists which showed 73.9% of respondents thought that mental wellbeing was not adequately incorporated in their training. Dr McIntosh discussed the difference between Mental Health and Mental Wellbeing and how this impacts the field of forensic anthropology.

Dr Julie Roberts then gave her personal insights to vicarious trauma, focusing on bridging the gap between academia and practice. Dr Roberts highlighted things which can impact mental health in casework, including: working long hours, frequently away from home, disrupted work-life balance, lack of sleep, unhealthy eating/drinking patterns, and difficult working conditions. She then highlighted the steps that can be taken to prepare both students and practitioners. For students, high quality/relevant teaching, involvement in programmes from practitioners about real cases, attendance at post mortem examinations, work experience, CPD, and access to counselling are all critical to prepare students and minimise the impact of vicarious trauma. For practitioners Dr Roberts discussed the importance of mentorship from senior colleagues, clear direction & assistance throughout a case, guidance on codes of conduct, debriefs, and regular mental welfare checks.

This was followed by Dr Hannah Fawcett from Manchester Metropolitan University with their presentation on “Human Remains in the Courtroom - The Emotional Impact of Jury Duty.” Dr Fawcett highlighted that jurors aren't always provided adequate mental health resources. They then discussed ways in which the emotional impact can be lessened for jurors, with a focus on 3D models. Dr Fawcett spoke on how using 3D models can be a useful tool for jurors to engage with the radiological data from a particular victim. However, they highlighted that we need to understand exactly how jurors interact with these types of models and how they make jurors feel.

The final presenter of the day was Dr Maria Livanou from Manchester Metropolitan University talking about “The emotional impact of being indirectly exposed to traumatic events.” Dr Livanou outlined the emotional consequences of PTSD and post-IET distress. Dr Livanou stated that risks for post-IET distress include: years of professional experience, high stress, own personal history of trauma, health, personality traits, poor self-care, lack of social support, use of alcohol and tobacco, and inadequate training.

The presentations shared similar themes in prevention and causes of vicarious trauma in forensic anthropology including the importance of access to mental health resources, preparation, and mentorship. Collaboration between academia and practice may help lessen the impact of vicarious trauma and better prepare forensic anthropologists for the emotional impact of the field.

Review by Conner Welty

If you would like to write a review for our next conference, then please get in touch as we'd love to include different views.