

Hannah Lycett-Smith

I hadn't initially planned on studying archaeology at all – as a kid I'd wanted to work as a civil rights museum curator. But when I didn't get the results to study BA History at my first-choice university, I decided to take a chance and accept an offer of studying BA Archaeology and Ancient History at Cardiff University. During my undergraduate degree I fell in love with the archaeological side of my degree - particularly bioarchaeology and osteology. Following my undergraduate degree, I then went on to study MSc Archaeological Science at Cardiff University.

I've lived in Cardiff my whole adult life and I now can't imagine leaving. For the last five years I've fallen in love with the city, Cymru, and Welsh archaeology – a dw i'n dysgu siarad Cymraeg! When I was deciding what to base my MSc dissertation on I knew it had to be osteological and it had to be local. When I volunteered at Amgueddfa Cymru to curate human remains from Llandough medieval cemetery, I realised the teeth would be perfect for dietary reconstruction. My methodology was initially suggested by my amazing supervisor, Katie Faillace, who suggested I use my dissertation as a pilot study for a new combination of methods. I followed her advice, and my research focused on combination of dental microwear textural analysis and calculus microdebris analysis.

Receiving the Gwobr Archaeoleg Cambrian Archaeological Award has been an incredible experience. Seeing my research recognised as significant to Welsh archaeology has been incredibly rewarding. I am so pleased to have contributed to an archaeological subject which I love so much. I'm now working in the commercial sector as a Project Archaeologist at Archaeology Wales Ltd., and every day I get to further explore Welsh archaeology.

My advice for anyone interested in archaeology is to reach out to anyone who could give you an opportunity. Look into volunteer digs, email your local commercial archaeology units about work experience, look into lectures at your local museums and universities! There are so many opportunities to get involved!