

## Other News

### **The Kingswood Collection**

In the summer of 2003, Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society were asked by Rob Randall, chairman of the Collections Committee of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution (BRLSI), if we would be interested in looking at the collections of Kingswood School, Bath.

For many years the school had a flourishing museum, with substantial collections of geology and archaeology, but for several years these were relegated to storage. The school now needed to dispose of the entire collection. Three of the Society's members, Ken Appleby, Dawn Hodgson and myself, visited the school to meet David Brown, a member of the teaching staff. We were shown into a boiler room, where all of the geological material had been stored. Sadly this room had flooded to a considerable depth and we were faced with dozens of soggy cardboard boxes, many with their specimens spilling out and scattered all over the floor. To try to recover and identify these would have been almost impossible.

We were taken into a physics laboratory in the main school building, where benches and floor were covered with boxes, trays, newspaper and archaeological material. However, there was a card index system of the entire archaeological collection which was photocopied and given to us. David Brown indicated we had seventy-two hours to move all of this material before the decorators moved in, otherwise the collections would be disposed of.

Two days later, a team comprising Ken Appleby, Edward and Jackie Thompson and myself arrived at the school in three cars plus a caravan. All of the archaeology and some of the mineral collection was loaded up and taken in convoy to Upper Row Farm for temporary storage in Gordon Hendy's barn. By lunchtime of that day the whole lot had been moved and safely stored.

During the next three months parts of the collection were transported to BRLSI in Queen Square where, helped by Becky Brown, we unpacked, identified, recorded and boxed them up. Fortunately there were only four or five things missing from the inventory. Several items that had been loaned to Kingswood School in the 1950s and 60s belonged to BRLSI and were returned.

Now this important archaeological material from Lansdown, Bathwick, Sion Hill, The Paragon and elsewhere in the Bath area is safely stored. Decisions will have to be made whether this should stay with BRLSI or move to another museum already possessing material from the same sites.

**Bob Whitaker**