



Ariel

"I come to answer thy best pleasure." The Tempest Act 1 Sc.ii

The Journal of the Newport-Kutaisi Twinning Association Issue No 7 October 2003



- Caerleon Arts Festival
- The Newport Ship
- The Knight in the Panther's Skin
- and much, much more.

Celebrating the cultural links between Kutaisi and Newport

Ariel 7

"I come to answer thy best pleasure." *The Tempest Act1 Sc.ii*

Editors

Catherine Philpott

Mike Singleton

October 2003



In this edition we celebrate one of the brightest spots in our recent unusually warm and long summer, the Caerleon Arts Festival, the brainchild of Dr. Russell Rhys. Ten sculptures were produced inspired by Caerleon's fascinating history, embracing the Romans, and Arthurian mythology.

We continue to celebrate the Newport Ship, one of the best things to happen to Newport. This totally unique vessel is a reminder of Newport's importance in the mediaeval period. We are very grateful to Ron McCormick of the Newport Ship organisation for his article, as attractive to the readers this end as in Kutaisi.

We conclude the world-famous saga of the 'Knight in the Panther's Skin' - it gets even more exciting! It is interesting to see how different cultures in Europe use the same material; here we are amongst adventures of knights every bit as compelling as any of those in the Arthurian myths. I was fascinated to see this when the puppeteers came early on in our twinning relationship. Our shared roots go back thousands of years.

We are very pleased to report interesting news of some of the individuals who make the relationship between our two fair cities such a special one. It is essential that we get new blood into our Association and it seems as if some of our young people are taking this new-blood-thing very literally!

We are delighted with the excellent contributions to this Ariel and look forward to receiving many more, no matter how small, to maintain our continuing story. We are also very grateful for ideas, photos, reports details about relatives and friends in Kutaisi and newspaper and magazine articles as well.

MDS

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Acknowledgements to Ian Irving for his help and advice.

Caerleon Arts Festival

For those who have yet to visit Newport, Caerleon lies north east of our city on the banks of the River Usk. This historic town's history goes back to the 3rd century AD to the days of the Roman occupation where the 3rd Roman Legion had its fortress, its amphitheatre and barracks – the remains of which can still be seen to this day.

Mike Singleton in conversation with -
Dr. Russell Rhys

'After my Georgian visit I had a vision of Caerleon adorned with cultural icons, which belong to the people, I admit I was 'obsessive' about it. I like sculptures because I feel it allows popular participation: people can be present at the making. The works can be seen, can be admired, people can relate to them and at the end of the process they own them. In some countries sculptures have become central to their image, think of the Little Mermaid in Copenhagen, the Trevi Fountain in Rome; Caerleon can join the list.

This year has been the first part of my dream – I am looking to create a 'critical mass' of cultural, artistic and aesthetic achievements: certainly my ideas are ambitious, maybe even explosive. By 2005 Caerleon will own 30 sculptures but that will not be all. With the aid of 'serious men with serious money' there is a plan in my head to honour the fact that the River Usk has the second highest rise and fall of any river in the world at 14m. From the bare stone bedrock of the river will rise a massive



sculpture of the goddess of the River Usk. Covered by high tide, twice a day the goddess will be uncovered and washed by the river.

However none of these dreams are possible without the financial and generous support that came from the whole local community, from the highest public bodies to the ordinary citizen. I am as proud of the financial teamwork organised to support my dream, as I am of the dream itself.

The Vision

At the beginning of what turned out to be a long memorable summer for perfect weather Caerleon hosted its first Arts Festival.

Dr Russell Rhys had a vision for Caerleon, an ambitious one. It was to take the form of an Arts Festival that would establish Caerleon as an artistic and cultural centre, principally for sculpture. Fascinatingly this vision was directly inspired by his visit to Kutaisi in 2000 – his vision took



shape when he saw the exquisite skill of Arsen Pochkhua with boxwood. He realised that wood was the stuff of his dreams. Wood is abundant and can generally be worked quickly. Thus it can be said that this year's Sculpture Symposium in Caerleon was born in Georgia.

Groups were set up to organise and be responsible for separate aspects of the event. Under Peter Appleton Head of Sculpture at UWCN the 'Field Committee' set out to encourage sculptors of wood to apply to take part.

Nearly fifty from all over the world made it known that they would like to. From this list 10 sculptors were invited.



to take part. They came from as far away as the Republic of China, Bulgaria, Czech Republic and three came from the UK. The Arts Festival organisers were hugely indebted to the generosity of caerleon restaurateurs and hoteliers who provided the artists with all their meals and UWCN for the accommodation they gave.



Other fringe events were held such as pottery, craft demonstrations, concerts, children's art exhibition, art on the railings and a fun chariot race – fun but taken very seriously!

So, on a blazing hot early July afternoon, we were highly honoured to have Rhodri Morgan AM, our own First Minister for Wales open the Festival in a field where the sculptors would be working for the following 10 days.

Throughout the long hot days the sculptors worked surrounded by visitors, all anxious to see how the lumps of wood would be transformed. The artists at times prayed for rain since they could see their work drying out rapidly. 10,000 people came to see. Ten beautiful works of art were created.



L: Ed Harrison Wales
Above: Zhaolei Republic Of China

The sculptures belong to Caerleon and its people and are being sensitively sited around the town. This begins what will be a sculpture trail. By 2005 a further 20 will be added to complete the grand vision that is Russell's but now shared by us all.



I interviewed some of the sculptors and they told me how they were inspired by 'The Romano-Celtic Vision'



PHIL BEWS was moved by the Romano-Celtic atmosphere so that his piece was both Roman and Celtic. The Roman head, with its helmet, is angular whilst the spirals represent Celtic lyricism. The woman emphasises the virtue of femininity. The animal lightens the sculpture, which insists it must not be taken too seriously - it is a conjuring trick, linking the two cultures.

MILAN VACHA is a Czech sculptor. His wood was oak and he was inspired by it to produce a work to do with the family. There is a father and a mother in his piece, which convey the idea of love, togetherness and memory. His hope was that he gathered what was good in the wood, in love and in life.



SARKA VACHOVA is a Czech puppet-maker and this is reflected in her articulated statue. She was attracted to the idea of Arthur and felt that this story was the inspiration of this country. She felt there was something filmic in her work, maybe a connection with the Egyptian Pharaohs. She wanted us to see a good and caring king, the first to establish moral authority.



DAVE JOHNSON saw his wood as a large cylinder, which he cut vertically into 120-degree segments; these were then turned outwards to make 3 triangles to represent the eternal triangle of Arthur, Guinevere and Lancelot. The logos on the Arthur and Lancelot pieces are traditional Celtic. Arthur is placed between the other two: he has a relationship with each one but also knows of their separate union. He hoped he had twinned the Arthurian with the Celtic.

ALEXANDER IVANOV is an ebullient Bulgarian. He felt he should make only small changes to the wonderful shape he had been given. He wanted to work with the shape, the branches should seem like horns. This was a "Celtic Spirit": it was not a god. He wanted to capture the idea of legendary figures. He was from Thrace, which had contact with the Celts and, as then, he was making a connection with them, exchanging gifts. The hole was important to lighten the mass. The top part is like wings but should also suggest flowers. The finished piece should seem hard and soft and strong.



From interviews by
Mike Singleton



ED HARRISON comes from a family of wood-carvers; his great-aunt started the tradition at the opening of the twentieth century. He wanted to capture the shape-shifting qualities of the wood and also its plasticity, its ability to flow and change as you looked at it. The character is Merlin, one forever trapped inside an oak tree. He wanted us to feel that this was a real being.

£1,200 + living costs will be awarded to those selected to attend.

NB Application to be made as soon as possible.

Caerleon Arts Festival 2004

We invite Georgian sculptors of wood to apply to participate in next year's
Sculpture Symposium

Further details can be found on our website:

www.caerleon-arts.org

or

e-mail

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The Queen honours the Georgian Ambassador His Excellency Mr. & Mrs Teimuraz Mamatsashvili



In April of this year H.E. Mr. Teimuraz Mamatsashvili and his wife received an invitation from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to dine and stay overnight at Windsor Castle.

His Excellency's hand-written note at the bottom of the left-hand page will indicate how much they enjoyed such a unique experience.



Windsor Castle

We would like to thank him for allowing us to publish these pages. Very few of us have any idea as to the arrangements for such an occasion and found the guest-list and seating arrangements most interesting.

We all look forward to entertaining Georgia's Ambassador here in Newport, one day.



Derek Butler
Catherine Philpott

Newport's 'Mary Rose'

The story of the discovery of the Newport Mediaeval Ship

By Ron McCormick

In July 2002 the remarkably well-preserved timber remains of a mediaeval ship were discovered during building works for Newport's new Arts Centre being constructed in central Newport on the banks of the River Usk.

It is the most complete example of a 15th century merchant ship, thought to have been about 1465, to be found anywhere.

Although Newport's riverbank had long been the centre of trade and life in the ancient town - being close to the main thoroughfare and only yards from the 12th century castle at the heart of the mediaeval port *Novus Burgus* - planners did not expect to uncover such a magnificent find.

Word of the discovery quickly spread throughout the area following a feature in the local newspaper and television news bulletins and people flocked in their thousands to see the vessel slowly being revealed from under fifteen feet of Usk river mud. I was amongst those who went to see it on the two public viewing evenings, eager to see what



all the fuss was about. Interest was so great that an estimated 16,000 people queued for hours to get a glimpse of the emerging ship

and the City Council who own the site, was eventually persuaded to open a permanent viewing platform. By November the ship was finally raised and an estimated forty thousand visitors had passed through the site and numerous articles had been published in the international press and on television.



A National Treasure

It was a magnificent sight as day after day archaeologists beavered away cleaning and measuring, slowly revealing more and more of the timber frame and uncovering hundreds of extraordinary artefacts. In the words of Sir Harry Jones, leader of Newport Council, *"The ship is magnificent"* and the only known example of an armed merchantman of this period. As the only fifteenth century vessel to have been discovered it represents a missing link in north European maritime history and fills a gap between the 14th century Bremen Cog and the 16th century *Mary Rose*. It has been described as a cross between a Viking long-ship and the later caravel design, it is nearly 25 metres long with a beam of 8m and is a similar size to the *Pinto* - one of Columbus' trio of ships that sailed on his famous voyage of discovery to the Americas in 1492.

The Newport ship has been dendrochronologically dated to the winter of 1465 and had apparently recently returned from Portugal, as witness the recovered examples of Portuguese 'Merida ware' pottery, as well as cork and coins of the sovereigns Alfonso V and Duarte I who ruled in the 1430s.

The ship's importance to our maritime history and traditions cannot be over-estimated, as there is no parallel ship in the UK to com-

pare with this discovery. It is indeed earlier than the famous *Mary Rose*, Henry VIII's flagship currently under conservation and public display in Portsmouth. Only a handful of medieval ships have ever been found in Britain and even re-used fragments of these ships are extremely rare.

For Wales, this discovery complements finds of ancient boats from the Gwent Levels including the Roman boat from Magor c 280-320 AD and an earlier mediaeval boat found in the eroding foreshore at Magor Pill 1240 AD. This new startling find confirms this area of South East Wales as the most prolific source of such early maritime discoveries in Britain and places it in a unique position in the sea-going history of these islands.

The Newport Ship answers a number of questions on the evolutionary step between a long ship and a later trading cog/caravel.

with spices and wine. The West coast of Africa and even the Americas would easily have been within its range as the vessel is a similar size to John Cabot's ship the *Matthew* in which he discovered Newfoundland in 1497.

It was a period of great invention and discovery and the ability of the shipwrights and sailors of the time should not be underestimated. The Newport ship was plying its Atlantic trade over a hundred years before Drake and fifty years before the *Mary Rose*. Could this vessel have carried Henry Tudor back from France? Could this type of ship have served as transport for Welsh archers during the Hundred Years War? Historians are only now beginning the task of examining the social and economic context in which she worked. Certainly, much is already known about its con

Our Editor!!



It would have been typical of the North European vessels upon which commerce relied, and which explored the Americas. Many of our great trading ports feature this type of vessel on their seals, and the present find is of international interest. As its secrets are uncovered we will gain a window on to the world of local seamen during the 'Age of Discovery'. The crew have been compared to astronauts, as they sailed across the Atlantic to fish on the Grand Banks and probed previously unexplored waters, protected by their faith and lucky charms. Such vessels would have carried salt fish, necessary to the strict religious observance of the 15th century Europe. This ship would have probably carried British wool and cloth out of the Severn ports, sailing to Ireland, France and Spain, undoubtedly it would have returned laden

struction as ship experts have spent hundreds of hours examining the complexities of the carpentry. Archaeologists and historians have been amazed at the quality of the craftsmanship and construction of the Newport ship, as there is little evidence of decay affecting the timbers. Its recovery was slowed by many weeks while archaeologists grappled with wood and iron fixings that refused to be parted from one another.

Caught in a Storm?

So how did such a magnificent ship come to be abandoned on Newport's riverside? Well a surprising amount has already been discovered by archaeologists as they have set about their task of recording its timbers. Evidence of a cradle beneath the ship and a

large rope looped lengthways along the hull indicate that she was hauled up the small creek possibly for repairs. A doorway had been cut into its starboard side and steps fitted to allow access into the hold, presumably to enable large timbers to be easily brought into the work area. It is in this lower deck area that the first clues to its probable fate were to be found.

The remains of two pumps for emptying bilge water were found near the mast step. The unexpected remains of two further pumps were also found, one in the stern and one in the bow, and caused experts to wonder if these were extra pumps installed because the ship was badly leaking. The keel is made of beech, unlike the rest of the mainly oak vessel, and ship expert Owain Roberts has indicated that this is a replacement keel. The rest of the hull shows signs of heavy wear and various repairs; the keel however is largely unmarked and may have been only months old before the ship finished its working life. But the really tantalising piece of evidence so far discovered is to be found on the keelson at the mast step. Along with the mast and rig this crucial element can only be



described as the main powerhouse of the vessel - its 'engine'. As archaeologists cleaned away the centuries of accumulated mud they uncovered a catastrophic crack across the mast step and evidence of a running repair. This would have led to great instability in the mast and the most horrendous creaking as the mast flexed under the full force of the wind. Had the Newport ship succumbed to a major storm losing its power as the mast step gave way under the pressure? Was she unable to continue her journey and forced to limp into

port? Why was a full repair or replacement never completed and why was she finally abandoned in that riverside creek to be cannibalised and left for dead, finally to be enveloped by the choking Usk river mud?

A Future unravelling its History

Five hundred and fifty years later and after more than 6 months of painstaking archaeological deconstruction the ship is now safely out of its muddy grave. The search for answers however, is only just beginning as historians and archaeologists begin their work of putting this mediaeval jigsaw puzzle back together again. The ship timbers are presently undergoing recording and conservation that will take many years to complete. Helped by a £3.5 million grant from the Wales National Assembly, Newport City Council has proposed a plan to display the reconstructed ship in a special purpose built gallery in the basement of the New Arts Centre only yards from where it was first discovered.

Despite the many unanswered questions, what is clear is that with this ship the people of Newport and South Wales have gained an extraordinary insight to our ancient maritime heritage. It is also a pan-European heritage and one that will draw visitors from right across the world - and something of which we should all be proud.

To find out more about the Newport Mediaeval Ship visit

www.thenewportship.com

The website of the

Friends of the Newport Ship

or write to
3 - 4 North Street,
Newport, NP20 1JZ South Wales,

Ron McCormick

Vice Chairman

Friends of the Newport Ship



All photographs © Ron McCormick

THE KNIGHT IN THE PANTHER'S SKIN

*For our new readers a summary of what has gone before:
Part 1 introduced us to three heroes.*

TARIEL is the knight in the panther's skin, so called because he wore the skin and head of one in honour of his lady, NESTAN-DAREJAN, who he thought of as a panther. She had been abducted and he was on a quest to find her.

AVTANDIL encountered the sad knight on his quest. To win the hand of TINATIN, his king's daughter, he had promised her to find the panther knight again.

NURADIN PRIDON was met by TARIEL in the course of his search for NESTAN. He told the knight about a beautiful woman he had encountered who the panther knight was sure was his love and so PRIDON became a part of the quest too.

And so we continue the saga:

There was great sorrow at the court of ROSTEVAN when AVTANDIL left. The despair he felt at leaving TINATIN reduced him to floods of tears as he journeyed to the forested wilderness.

After a long journey he reached the cave where AS-MAT told him her master had gone on his search leaving a message for AVTANDIL to follow him. He set off at once and found TARIEL sitting by a large lion he had just killed.

TARIEL was in the depths of despair, wishing for death. Only after much urging were his spirits revived and they journeyed back to the cave. Then, the following morning the two friends set off once more and soon reached the sea-shore where they separated. AVTANDIL rode east to seek NURADIN PRIDON and TARIEL rode west to continue his search.

After several days journey AVTANDIL reached the coast near the Turkish border. There he was entertained lavishly by PRIDON and told the story of TARIEL's continuing fruitless search. Then AVTANDIL set off again, in the company of PRIDON's finest knights.

A hundred days travelling brought them to a great gathering of merchants. The merchants, having travelled from Baghdad with treasures and fabrics for trading, were in great distress as they were afraid to set out in their ship for fear of pirates.

The great hero AVTANDIL dismissed their fears and promised to defend them. Courage returned to the merchants and so they set sail. After a few days pleasant sailing they were attacked by pirates but AVTANDIL fought and killed them all.

The merchants, overjoyed at their delivery by their champion, offered him all their treasures. This offer he refused saying it was God who delivered them but he did have a request. He asked that he be allowed to disguise himself as a merchant and become head of the caravan so that he could continue the search on which he was engaged.

This was agreed and, after many days travelling, they arrived at a great port and were greeted by PATHAN

KHATUN the wife of the chief merchant, a woman of great beauty and wealth. She, though no longer young, was filled with great desire when she saw AVTANDIL and wrote him a letter full of love.

Though surprised, AVTANDIL decided to respond to her advances as he saw her as a possible source of information about NESTAN-DAREJAN. He wrote to her and a meeting was arranged.

That evening, as they embraced, a young man entered their chamber and cursed PATHAN and threatened her with punishment to come. When he left she was terrified and implored him to kill the youth. He, at once, went out, killed the youth, threw his body into the sea and returned to PATHAN.

On his return she explained why she had begged him to kill the youth.



Once, when at the king's court, she was in her chamber near the sea when she saw a small boat with two black slaves and a wondrously beautiful young woman come ashore. She at once sent her own slaves to bring the young woman to the palace. She told no-one of her visitor and kept her in secret in her rooms. After some time she showed the girl, who was NESTAN-DAREJAN, to her husband but swore him to secrecy.

However, when her husband went next to the king's court, in a drunken fit, he told the king about the beautiful girl and promised her as wife to the king's son.



She was immediately brought to the king's court where she dazzled everyone with her beauty. The king ordered that when his son returned from a war he was fighting he should marry NESTAN. She, horrified at this proposal, said nothing but bribed her guards to let her escape. PATHAN gave her a magnificent horse upon which she fled the country.



After she had gone PATHAN foolishly told her lover (the young man AVTANDIL had killed) she had helped NESTAN to escape. From that time on the lover threatened to tell the king. Her punishment would be that she must eat her own children before being put to death. Hence, she had asked AVTANDIL to kill the youth.

After hearing this story AVTANDIL begged PATHAN to tell him what she knew of the maid she had helped to escape. She said she had learned that NESTAN-DAREJAN was now in the hands of the KAJI, a people who, though human, had magical gifts and practised sorcery. She was held in a great fortress and guarded by ten thousand knights. The ruler, DULAR-DUKHT, had decreed that she be married to his son, ROSAN, when he had returned from a funeral in another land.

On hearing this AVTANDIL revealed his true identity and told the story of TARIEL's search. He begged PATHAN to help him free the imprisoned NESTAN. She agreed and sent a slave, wrapped in a magical cloak of invisibility, to carry a letter to NESTAN. This the slave accomplished and returned with letters for PATHAN and TARIEL.

Immediately upon the slave's return AVTANDIL sent his attendant knights to PRIDON to tell him of NESTAN's imprisonment whilst he sailed off to find TARIEL. To his delight he found him in the cave and with great joy handed him the letter from NESTAN.

They immediately prepared to set off for the KAJI stronghold but first TARIEL took AVTANDIL behind the cave where, amongst the treasure trove of an ancient people, were three suits of magical armour in which they clothed themselves, taking the third suit for PRIDON.

After a long journey their meeting with PRIDON was a joyous occasion but short-lived as they wished to go quickly to KUTATI. After much debate, on the advice of PRIDON, they took only three hundred knights rather than a large army and set off travelling by night and resting by day.

After arriving at the KAJI stronghold each hero took a hundred knights and attacked from three separate directions. The battle was furious and bloody but at last TARIEL fought his way to the tower where he found his beloved NESTAN. Then, having killed the ten thousand knights who had fought against them, they loaded camels and mules with booty and set off for their homelands.

First they journeyed to the court where they greeted and thanked PATHAN and gave the land of the KAJI to the king. Then they took ship and journeyed to PRIDON'S court where ASHAT was waiting. There TARIEL and NESTAN were married in great splendour.

Next they went to the court of ROSTEVAN where TINATIN was awaiting the return of her hero. Another magnificent ceremony celebrated the wedding of AVTANDIL and TINATIN.

So, the story ends with the three heroes having succeeded in their quests. They were all rulers of great peoples and countries but continued to visit each other and bring harmony to their lands where love, honour, friendship, courage and religion were the essential virtues binding them together.

MEL HARRIS

Illustrated by Catherine Philpott





The Marriage between Katie POCHKAHUA and Andrew ROCK 2003



On the 7th May of this year we had the wonderful occasion of a wedding here in Newport between Katie and Andrew.

We send our heartfelt congratulations to the young couple and wish them a very long and happy life together.



Pat Wright with Katie.

It all happened so quickly. One cold November evening, far away from home, family and friends I met him in the street and that was it.

We've been together since then. It was like magic, the link, one after another. Firstly, when I was going to explain where Georgia was, I was happily surprised that Andrew already knew, he told me that some students from Kutaisi stayed in his parents house. Later we found out that my cousin,

Rosemary & Derek Butler celebrating the happy occasion.



Tato used to play football with Andrew and his friend Tom (who is my neighbour now) when visiting Newport three years ago. Then it appeared that Pat Wright, my friend or my Newport Mum, if I may say, was Andrew's family's old friend. I remember when I introduced him to Pat she said - 'Andrew Rock of course, I should have guessed!'

I want to thank Judy Marris from Charles Street Community Learning Centre for helping me pass the CAE exam and for the opportunity of voluntary work teaching English to foreign students - something I always wanted to do. Next year I hope to enrol on a Teaching English as a Foreign Language TEFL course, run either in Bristol (some chance to liaise with the Bristol-Tbilisi Association perhaps!!) or Bath.



Andrew L. talking to our secretary Vera Brown and her husband.

It is hard to be so far from my family, friends and neighbours. It's not also easy to establish new priorities, to start up building new plans for the future.

I want to say that Andrew's Mum and Dad helped me to be at home here with their warm welcome to the family, great support and love. I will always appreciate their kindness and try to pass it on to the baby we are expecting.



Above: L: Tato, Katie's cousin who came over from Kutaisi for the wedding seen with Catherine Philpott.

Finally, I want to say that it is all due to the Association and in fact, the friendship between cities can really make the world appear smaller, families larger, connection and understanding between people from different countries or cultures stronger. Trust my word - I've got experience!

Katie Baia Rock

NEWS & LETTERS

Maka's Virtual Buildings Bring Plans for New Hospital to Life

A student from Newport's twin town of Kutaisi is playing a hi-tech role in the creation of Cardiff's new children's hospital. Mariam Melkadze – who is known as Maka – trained as an architect in her native Georgia before coming to study for an MA in Multimedia at the University of Wales College, Newport (UWCN).

Now she is making full use of her professional skills by working part-time as an architectural assistant at the offices of Newport architects Boyes Rees. Using the latest computer technology, she creates sophisticated 3D models which bring architects' plans to life. Maka's designs are displayed on a computer screen and enable clients to take a "virtual tour" of new buildings before construction work begins. She also uses her expertise to create life-like 3D pictures of proposed buildings – the modern equivalent of traditional architect's drawings.

Among the projects she is currently working on are plans for a children's hospital in Cardiff and the extension to a Newport secondary school.



Maka Melkadze, from Newport's twin town, Kutaisi, is using sophisticated computer technology to bring architect's plans to life.

"I am very pleased to be able to work at my chosen profession whilst studying here," said 25-year-old Maka, who trained for five years at the Georgian Technical University Institute of Architecture. "The people I am working with are really wonderful, very friendly and helpful. It's very satisfying to be able to gain new skills by using computer technology which ties in with the Masters degree I am studying at UWCN."

Architecture is in Maka's blood – her father is an architect – and, since qualifying in 1999, she has worked on civic building design and urban redevelopment assignments both in her native Georgia and in Germany. She found out about the MA course through her contacts with the Newport Kutaisi Twinning Association, which was set up to celebrate the cultural links between the two cities.

"I came over on a visit to find out about the course and it rained all the time," she said. "I was wondering, where is the sun in Wales? Now I love it. Caerleon, where I am studying, has a wonderful landscape and is so quiet and peaceful."

She is very enthusiastic about studying for an MA at UWCN. "I was attracted to the course because it's so flexible, and gives people from different backgrounds the opportunity to make full use of multimedia in their work. The tutors are excellent and very supportive. It has opened up many new doors for me and is giving me a new understanding of multimedia. My ambition now is to find a job where I can make maximum use of the skills I am gaining here."

**Press release issued by
University of Wales College Newport 6 May 2003**

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Latest Arrival in Newport

DAVID MEGRELISHVILI IS OUR NEW STUDENT

Everyone here in Newport is delighted to meet our latest arrival who has come to take up the 2003 place at University of Wales College Newport.

We extend our very warmest welcome to David Megrelashvili 24 who has already begun his studies at Alt-yr-Yn College for a Masters in Business Administration qualification.

Previously he studied law at Javakhihivi State University gaining a Diploma and was, before coming here, working at the Kutaisi branch of the National Bank of Georgia.

Many of us remember him from our visits to Kutaisi and look forward to meeting him again.

David can be contacted through Bernard Tyson.



From Peter & Ann Goodman
Chepstow South Wales

Reading *Ariel* we are constantly impressed by the amazing achievements of Georgia, bearing in mind how small the country is. Georgians have always made a sizable mark on their big neighbour, Russia, in Communist times and before. If a Russian text needed a mysterious and beautiful heroine then they always seemed to reach for a Georgian princess. You have included a number of interesting Georgian men, we especially enjoyed the fascinating works of Pirosmeni; we have also heard about an inspiring Georgian queen and a star female student - look forward to learning more about the men and women who have made the Georgia we know and who are making the Georgia of the future.

We also enjoy reading about what makes this part of our own small nation special. Everybody is excited about the wonderful ship that has emerged from the mud of the River Usk. Newport is starting to escape from the shadow of our own big brother, Cardiff. We hope to find out more about the past, present and future of our own new city; we Newportians, perhaps, do not stop and look and think about Newport enough.

Keep up the good work.



MARRIAGE



The wedding took place recently between Egnate Sandukhadze (Tato) and Eka.



It was a wonderful, traditional Georgian wedding attended by a 100 guests with lots of music and dancing. Their honeymoon was taken in the spa resort of Likani in the Borjomi region, famous for its water.

We all know Tato from his visits here and those of us who have travelled to Kutaisi meeting him there with his mother Madlen Makhviladze - a great friend of the Association and teacher in the English Studies Department of the Kutaisi State University.

Eka is a pharmacist and manager of a chemist shop in Kutaisi.

We send our very heartiest congratulations and wish them both all the very best for their future happiness together. We look forward to meeting them both one day.

CP

From Caroline Brown
Leatherhead Surrey.

I very much enjoyed reading about the ship. I can now see it is as wide as the widest part of our lounge and three times as long as that. I was also interested to read that they had taken it apart to lift but was rather sad at their having to cut through the treewood nails which had done such a valiant job over the last 600 years. I wish I had been able to view from the platform! It will certainly give the Georgians an impression of the respect we have for artefacts of the past.

I am looking forward to reading the next instalment of *"The Knight in the Panther's Skin"*. It reminds me of the ballads we used to read at University - all journeys and battles, mysterious knights and fantastically beautiful princesses etc. Just the names have a near eastern flavour.

I liked the Niko Pirosmeni pages. That big, rather naive picture of Margareta reminds me of the picture of a boy on a blue background by (I think) Picasso. Same bold lines and full figure on the canvas. Did you bring back any Georgian wine? I would be very happy to "déguste" a little of the red one day!



Finally, for *Ariel*, I thought your choice and presentation of the photos on the back page was absolutely stunning. They just jumped out at me.

Caroline, a teacher of the French language once lived in Newport and still retains a keen interest in the city that was once her home for some years.



Newport Kutaisi Twinning Association.
Officers for 2003-2004

Chair:	Bernard Tyson
Vice-Chair:	Catherine Philpott
Secretary:	Vera Brown
Treasurer:	Rod McLeod
Press Officer:	Mike Singleton
Journal Editors:	Catherine Philpott Mike Singleton



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Sculptors of wood from
GEORGIA

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L to R Sculptures by Ed Harrison to be found in the
gardens of Fflwrwm Caerleon



Inside Front page: Caerleon Arts Festival Schools Competition

Above: R

Night Owl

Roman Soldier

Below: L to R

Roman Helmet Collage

St Cadoc's Parish Church

St. Cadoc's Pulpit

Bux Paper Mosaic

Lodge Hill Junior School

Lodge Hill Junior School

Caerleon Comp. School

Lodge Hill Infant's School

Endowed Junior School

Lodge Hill Infant's School



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