



New series 7.30 Sunday April 29

NEWS RELEASE

**April 18
Immediate**

Tracing the Cheshire Cat

A new series of Lost Treasures reveals new evidence surrounding the origins of the Cheshire Cat. The series begins on 26 April with the special episode on the Cheshire Cat a week later on 6 May.

References to the cat, believed to have been introduced to the region by the Phoenicians in 650 BC, appear all over the County in places like Grappenhall, Wirral, Stretton near Warrington and on the Macclesfield to Buxton Road.

St. Christopher's church in Pott Shrigley, just north of Bollington near Macclesfield has a famous 'Cheshire cat'. Inside the church, under the chancel arch close to the altar and built into the wall, there is a very large representation of the famous 'Alice In Wonderland Cheshire cat' as it is usually depicted today.

It is possible that Lewis Carroll may have known of this and other 'Cheshire cats' via his father, Rev. Charles Dodgson, vicar of Daresbury 1827 to 1843, who was a travelling Cheshire clergyman with relatives living in Cheshire.

On the outside of the church there is another representation of a grinning stone 'Cheshire Cat' and a head which resembles the 'Queen Of Hearts' character from 'Alice In Wonderland'. The arms of the 'Pott' family of Pott Shrigley are also topped by a representation of a Cheshire wild cat chained up and patiently sitting.

On the west face of the tower at St. Wilfrid's Church, Grappenhall, above the main window, is plainly sited a long carving of a crouching cat ready to spring probably placed there during the Tudor building phases of 1529 AD or 1539 AD but dating from an earlier period.

There's a very important image of a cat carved into the rocks on Bidston Hill, close to the Observatory. Here can be found a collection of rock carvings thought to date from the second century and to be of Romano-Celtic origin. The one of interest to us is that of a goddess with the moon at her feet and the face of a cat.

The series presented by adventure archaeologist Mark Olly who is a lecturer at West Cheshire College and encourages ordinary people to help piece together the past.

The series shows that our understanding of the past is on our own hands if people know where to look for it.

Programme producer Phil Hirst said: We often visit a location and our filming schedule is altered as new lost treasures are discovered on arrival. It's something that would do well on the whole ITV network. Adventure archaeology is all about people discovering their own treasures responsibly. It never ceases to amaze us what local people have discovered for themselves.”

The news series on ITV Granada starts on Sunday April 29 at 7.30 p.m. and runs for eight weeks www.lost-treasures.co.uk

ENDS

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