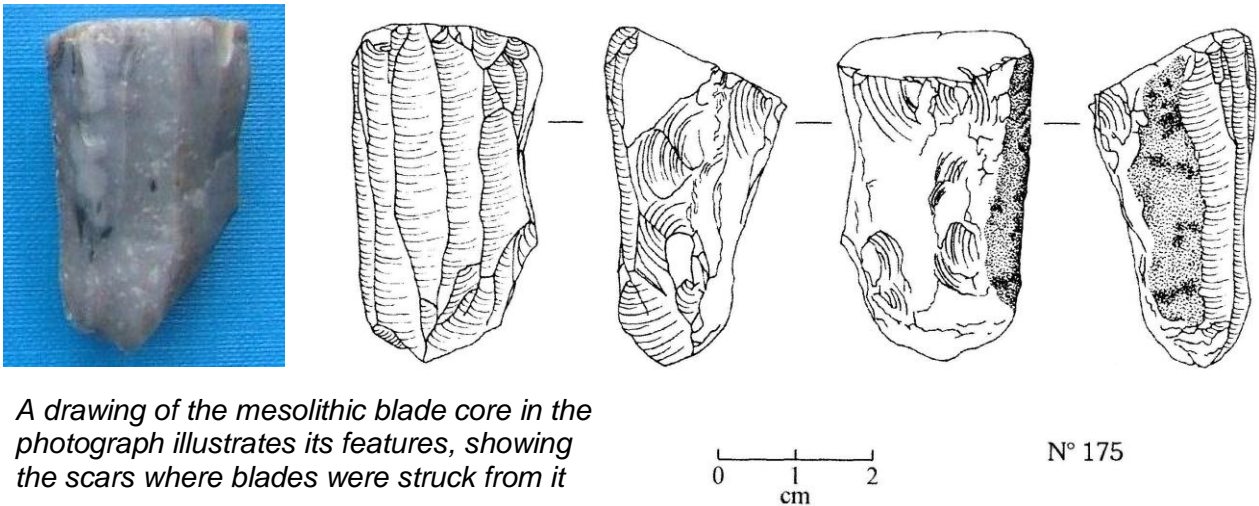


## 'A New Take On Drawing Flints' by Anne Wright

For several months I researched methods of drawing flints, and found very few descriptions of how to go about it. One article, published in the 1980s, involved drawing around the flint with a pencil, and then putting a sheet of glass over it and tracing through. I spent many difficult hours with this process, encountering mainly problems with parallax, when looking first at one side of the flint and then the other, leading in almost every case to wildly inaccurate dimensions. Also the very small size of some of the retouch meant that it was very difficult to see, let alone draw. Eventually, Barry became fed up with my frustration and suggested taking photographs of the flints as a starting point, and we found out how to use my digitising tablet to trace the images. This evolved into the method as it stands at the moment:



*A drawing of the mesolithic blade core in the photograph illustrates its features, showing the scars where blades were struck from it*

1 The flint is fixed in position on a sheet of graph paper, with a digital camera set up directly above it looking down. A pencilled label number should be in the field of view. Four small lamps are positioned around the perimeter. With one lamp switched on at a time, several photographs are taken of each view, moving the lamps at a low angle to throw the flake scars into sharp relief.

2 The images are downloaded into the computer, and checked for focus etc then each labelled as a file and saved.

3 The images are imported into an image manipulation program (we use Corel Photopaint), where they are cropped.



4 The cropped images are imported into a CAD program (CorelDraw), and reduced to fit the screen. Using a drawing tool and the digitising tablet, the outline of the flint and the flake scar edges etc are traced around. The underlying photograph is deleted, and the traced lines grouped into a single object. A second photo is imported and the tracing positioned over it, so any additional detail can be added. This is repeated with all the photographs. The final tracing is resized to actual dimensions using the graph paper on the photos for reference. Now for the hard bits!

5 The tracing is printed out at hairline width and twice life-size, and carefully compared to the flint through magnifying lenses, and any changes made where necessary, and the drawing is inked in, and rescanned.

6 The flint is examined again to determine from which direction each flake was struck, and ripple marks added to show this, altering spacing, position and thickness of ripple lines over the whole flint to give the impression of light coming from the top left. It is very important at every stage of drawing to accompany each one with a scale bar and identification number.

References:

*'Lithic Illustration'* by Lucille Addington, University of Chicago Press, 1986.

*'Illustration of Lithic Artefacts: A Guide to Drawing Stone Tools for Specialist Reports'* by Hazel Martingel and Alan Saville, 1988.