Time Team Unearth Mysteries of The North Sea

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Channel 4's Time Team crew were on campus this week to film some sections of an upcoming programme for the award-winning series.

Tony Robinson and his digging detectives headed to the University's HP Visual and Spatial Technology Centre to quiz Birmingham Archaeology experts on what the landscape that the North Sea now covers would have looked like over 10,000 years ago.

Birmingham Archaeology brains Professor Vincent Gaffney and Dr Kenneth Thomson took part in the lively on screen discussion with Tony, which involved analysing advanced graphics created through tracking of the submerged landscape.

The North Sea Palaeolandscape Project, headed up by Vincent and Ken, will be the focus of a two-part programme. The project is investigating the Mesolithic landscape that was lost after global warming led to the inundation of the North Sea Basin.

Using seismic data (donated for research by PGS) the study covers an area equivalent to that of Wales (around 22, 000 km2) and is the largest archaeo-geophysical survey ever attempted.

Professor Gaffney says: "It is a cliché that the past is a foreign country, but our work at Birmingham is actually recreating a prehistoric European country that was lost as a consequence of global warming 10,000 years ago."

The North Sea Time Team special is due to screen in spring 2007.

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