

CLASP

Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project

Registered Charity number 1111667



Ninth Annual Report
Year ending
31 August 2013

The Trustees

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REPORT BY THE CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES – ALAN WATSON

Archives

At last there have been some positive developments in the search for storage.

- We are now looking at the possibility of taking over one of the Gate Houses at the Weedon Depot to keep our archives in.
- The owners of Whitehall are considering letting us rent their barn where we keep some of archives.
- There are finance implications to both moves. Hopefully there will be more about this at the A.G.M.

I would like to thank all the Trustees, the members of the Organising Committee and all other groups and individuals associated with CLASP for their help and advice over the last 12 months. Once again I would like especially to put on record my thanks to:-

- Fred Kay, who was often to be found getting up from his sick bed to work alongside his dedicated band of followers. They have spent many a day walking up and down, up and down at Bannaventa, but it was worth it. More about the finds in Stephen's report.
- Ruth Downie for putting together this Annual Report from her home in the West Country.
- Nick Adams for allowing us to excavate test pits on his land this summer.
- Stephen Young, who has just left Northampton University. Stephen is not quite sure what he will be doing from now on but as our Director of Archaeology I am sure that he is investigating more sites for us to work on.

I commend this report to you as a true record of the work undertaken by CLASP during the past year. If you have any questions about the report, they may be raised at the Annual General Meeting.

Alan Watson

Chair of the Trustees

August 2013

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In terms of the long standing major projects being investigated by CLASP, interpretative and archiving work continues on the assemblage of artefacts retrieved from the ongoing field survey undertaken on the Roman Posting station at Bannaventa (Whilton Lodge). Large scale reconnaissance of the site continued into the late spring, when weather and time allowed, although only about a third of the area available for study was investigated in the detail that will be required. The large ceramic assemblage will take some time to process and analyse but undoubtedly can provide a clearer picture concerning material distribution in relation to the landscape features identified in the geophysical survey. This type of information is not readily available to many Romano-British settlements of this type.

Current anecdotal evidence from initial analysis appears to confirm the overall chronological profile of Bannaventa that has been previously suggested by our earlier work on the site. A Late Iron Age origin of indeterminate character should be confirmed for the site which then undergoes extensive change in layout and scale as a settlement in the late 1st to the early 2nd century AD. Presumably this reflects initial construction of the Posting Station associated with Watling Street. The settlement seems to have undergone further change and development during the late 2nd to early 3rd century AD focused on the Severan period. This premise is corroborated to a certain extent by the dating, derived through earlier excavation, of the construction of the initial defences of the settlement. The presence of late Central Gaulish colour coated ware and other imported wares also hints at an extensive late 3rd century redevelopment of the site in line with the large scale villa building programme known to be underway in the surrounding countryside at this time.

Currently the coins are being identified by Dr Mark Curteis (Essex Museum Service), the results of which will not only add significantly to the coin list of provenanced Roman coinage from the site but will in addition offer further detail on the origin and decline of Bannaventa during the Roman period. Members of the metal detecting societies of NNPast & NARC have also made available for recording other material found during fieldwork undertaken by them. This is associated with the site and from the immediate surrounding hinterland, the findings from which should be available for discussion in the next newsletter.

Fred Kay our resident geophysicist and myself have also continued to piece together and interpret the geophysical data obtained from the site during the winter and this along-side the other findings produced by the recent fieldwork will then be used to write a report for presentation to English Heritage as part of our obligation for receiving permission to work on a scheduled site.

Elsewhere during the summer a small number of test pits were excavated on and near Whitehall Farm to try and provide particular information on two aspects of the Roman site's development which as yet are still poorly understood; namely the location of a cemetery or cemeteries associated with the construction and evolution of the villa complex and evidence of the Late Iron Age focus for the site. In total three locations were chosen, two concerned with possible locations for burial sites whilst the third dealt with the excavation of the possible Late Iron Age enclosure surrounding the domestic structures.

In the case of the candidates for potential cemetery locations two distinct areas were chosen for investigation. A total of five pits were excavated across a paddock on land originally part of the farm but now in private ownership to the north east of the villa site. The rationale for the work

was to examine some geophysical anomalies located by a small scale geophysical survey of the area which had been undertaken in early June. The location dominates the heights overlooking the line of Watling Street as it winds its way northwards. This is one of the few areas in the locality of the villa that has not been investigated previously and which could potentially produce skeletons and graves of the Romano-British period, particularly as the site lies adjacent to the excavated later 5th/6th Anglo Saxon burial area that could be indicative of possible continuity of interment practice. Unfortunately as in the past any evidence of a cemetery remained elusive and further test pitting will be required before we can rule out the site as a potential candidate.

The other location lies to the south east of the villa complex along the field boundary where significant numbers of Roman coins have been detected in the past and a considerable depth of top soil covers the earlier archaeological surfaces. The known existence of an extensive swathe of Roman material found by detectorists across the area is suggestive of activity in the past in this part of the site particularly in the 3rd and 4th century AD. Unfortunately again apart from residual pottery of Roman date nothing of a structural nature or features were identified to prove the premise.

However after initial disappointment on locating the enclosure ditch of the Late Iron Age farmstead we were able to section a part of the feature originally identified in the geophysical survey of 2000. Although the ditch was not particularly deep or wide and somewhat truncated through medieval and late agricultural farming practice, the pottery recovered from the fill of the ditch indicated a mid to late 1st century AD date for the going out of use of the feature therefore confirming a Late Iron Age date for its construction. This is an extremely useful outcome for the archaeological interpretation of the site at Whitehall Farm because it substantiates the chronological development already postulated.

Unfortunately the talk planned for May to bring together the different strands of evidence obtained for the research excavation across the years had to be cancelled because of ill health but my intention is to reschedule the lecture for early October 2013. The lecture will be part of an evening which will also contain the premiere of the documentary being made for the Whitehall Farm Roman Villa Research Project and CLASP concerning the re-interment of the Anglo Saxon skeletons excavated some years ago.

Stephen Young

TREASURER'S REPORT

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project (CLASP)

I report on the accounts of CLASP for the year ended 31 March 2013, which are set out on the attached page.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Laura Sturrock FCA
39 Church Street, Nether Heyford, Northamptonshire, NN7 3LH
26 July 2013

CLASP Treasurer's Report AGM 2013

As usual I have tried to make the Accounts summary self explanatory.

Like every other organisation we are looking for extra funds, as so much of our funding is earmarked for specific activities. So if anyone has any good ideas for raising funds we beg you not to be shy in coming forward.

Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project

Receipts & Expenditure Account for Year Ending 31 March 2013

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Bf from 31.03.12 Bank	11,695.08		
Pd not on Statement	-658.49		
Cash in Hand	43.42		
	<u>11,080.01</u>	AGM Costs	29.25
Harpole Parish Council	1,000.00	Harpole spend	
History Societies	125.00	Finds Processing	
Other Donations	85.00	Website	61.28
Membership fees	575.00	Committee Room Hire	30.00
Bank Interest	18.87	Affiliation Fees	84.50
Profit from AGM = T Shirts	94.50	Insurance	505.98
Use of Magnetometer	640.00	Other	85.26
		Repairs	300.00
Total Receipts	<u>2,538.37</u>	Total Expenditure	<u>1,096.27</u>
		Bank Statement	12,472.72
		Cash in Hand	57.37
		Paid not yet on Statement	-7.98
	<u>13,618.38</u>		<u>13,618.38</u>

At the year end then, the Harpole balance	£2,950.85
Roman Research Trust	£2,500.00
Lottery Heritage Fund	£5,930.64
Money raised by ourselves	£1,140.62
Thus usable funds	<u>£12,522.11</u>

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR OF THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE

It is my intention this year to combine my two reports, that for the role of Chair and that as holder of the research and planning portfolio.

My first duty is to thank Norman Garnett for having held the role of Secretary of this Committee until very recently. He has now abdicated this position and the Committee has co-opted one of our individual members, Roger Penny, and appointed him as Secretary. Norman remains on the Committee in his position as the Whitehall Project representative. Thanks Norman, welcome Roger!

We also note this year the amalgamation of the two Daventry Groups, Friends of Daventry Museums and Daventry History Society. David Adams remains on the Committee as the representative for both. Thanks to Angela Adams for her service on the Committee as representative of the Friends Group. Daventry Museum is to be congratulated on its work in re-establishing their museum in a new location in New Street, Daventry. Please support them with a visit.

Whilst our membership overall remains relatively strong we must not remain complacent and should always be seeking to bring new members, both society and individual, on board. None of us get younger and we must seek members from all ages and with various skills and abilities.

My thanks must go to all the other members of the Committee for their service, both as officers and representatives. I am aware from my own experience that community service of this nature is time consuming and needs to be fitted in with other demands on our time, this is acknowledged.

We have still not resolved the question of an archive for storage of our materials. Several suggestions have been made but so far only one is being actively pursued, that at Weedon Depot. This will be a major project and CLASP would be involved with the developers of the site, but currently it is still in the exploratory stage so little can be reported about it. It is noted at the time of writing that the Chester's Farm project near Wellingborough has just been awarded four million pounds from the HLF for a formal county archive. This will have to be acknowledged in any work we might undertake, especially regarding any bid to the HLF.

Thanks again for another years editorship to Tony Johns, for editing and administering our newsletter. It is essential that the contributions to this come from as wide a base as possible and cover anything of interest, providing that it is broadly relevant.

Again the weather has been unkind to our field activities for a second year but hopefully with the current improvement things might bode well for more activity during the second part of this year. I do know our Archaeological Director has various plans for field work during the next few months, hopefully we will see as many as possible involved out there with this work.

Thanks must be given to Harpole Parish Council for a further donation to CLASP to facilitate work in their parish. This action is very much of mutual benefit as it helps the parish understand its early history but it also helps CLASP, especially with the Local People-Local Past project in its wider understanding of the Romano-British landscape across a much wider area. This is particularly so with the apparent status and significance of the villa at Barn Close.

As I reported in last year's report the Planning and Research Sub-Strategy was at that stage nearing fruition. I am pleased to say that it has now been accepted by your Trustees, it is therefore now formally CLASP policy. However I still wait for the first application to come to the Committee from a Society and/or an individual member(s) to initiate a new project.

Turning to research: our colleagues at TDLH have continued their work on the Towcester Hinterland Project, this is providing an additional, more in depth analysis, of the Romano-British landscape in the area surrounding Towcester, the Roman town of Lactodorum. Our metal detecting group NARC has identified interesting concentrations of finds at Preston Capes and elsewhere. NNPAST has continued its work at Bannaventa and one of its members, by careful analysis of aerial photographs, identified a probable Iron Age site near Long Buckby that was previously unknown to CLASP. Our associated group, the Barby Hill Archaeological Project, is continuing researching by way of non-intrusive archaeological means this site and the area immediately adjoining it. They are currently in the process of obtaining authority from Natural England to carry out limited open excavations on the site. These will hopefully take place during the late summer of this year.

My own personal research is, I must admit, still in progress. Owing to additional information that has come to light I am looking at the whole question of meeting places and the associated administrative structures that they represented. Some very interesting information is being identified as to the earliest roots of the county and probably what was there before it. I consider that this more in depth work will be of greater benefit and relevance to our understanding of the area in the immediate post Roman era. Just as a taster, the meeting sites in our area ranged from a Saxon royal witan to a Scandinavian thing!

Dave Hayward

MEMBERSHIP

There are 60 individual member of CLASP this year, and 14 group members.

Julia Johns

REPORTS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

BARBY HILL ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

Up on Barby Hill it has been a slow year, as we struggled through snow and hail and seemingly endless rain, and waded through a muddy morass that regularly came over the tops of our wellington boots. Despite this, we put in 18 days on site during the year (to May 2013), and managed to extend the magnetometry survey by a further 36,000 square metres, plus further fieldwalking and metal-detection prospecting in several new areas on the north side of the hill, together with a variety of backroom tasks.

It is increasingly clear that this Late Iron Age site extended over a fairly wide area of the hilltop - our surveys show evidence of roundhouses (often significantly intercut) over an area of about 5-6 hectares, but the main concentration of occupation is focused around the area that, by sheer ill luck, was selected as the site for Severn Trent Water's hilltop reservoir about 30 years ago. We will never know how much of the settlement has already been lost under the concrete and when STW extend the reservoir even further (planned for 2014- 15), it is a pretty safe bet that even more archaeology will be lost.

In planning the activities for 2013-14, I have therefore put a high priority on exploring the area that is at risk (which has involved obtaining permission from Severn Trent Water to work inside their compound) and thanks to the detailed magnetometer surveys already carried out, it has been a straightforward exercise to pinpoint some areas for trial trenching, one of which is directly adjacent to the reservoir compound.

Following successful discussions with Severn Trent and the two farmers involved, and a successful derogation application to Natural England, we now have the go-ahead for this work, and so we were back on the hill last week, cutting back waist-high undergrowth and badly overgrown hedge lines and burning off huge piles of brushwood cuttings, clearing the ground to allow a trial trench to be put in during August, over a section about 30 m in length directly adjacent to the reservoir compound. By the time you read this update, this work should be going ahead.

In addition to the trial trenching, I am planning to carry out further magnetometer work to extend the surveys as we still have not reached the limits of settlement in all directions. The plans also include a contour survey of the flat part of the hilltop, aimed at mapping the post-medieval ridge and furrow and establishing accurate contour profiles. There is an area that I believe represents a C16-18 plough headland, which has effectively masked potential Iron Age archaeology beneath an additional layer of soil build-up and this will be a target for further trial trenching once the other higher-priority tasks have been completed.

Several CLASP members are already involved in this work and, I am always very happy to welcome more volunteers.

Gren Hatton

01788 822411

BLISWORTH HERITAGE SOCIETY

In the last twelve months Blisworth Heritage Society has enjoyed talks covering local Blisworth history, the industrial history of Northamptonshire, Caroline Chisholm's life, Welsh cattle droving in the county, metal detecting, and 100 hundred years of gardening.

The Society has initiated the compilation of a Diamond Jubilee village scrapbook. Villagers and local societies have written about a host of subjects covering family history, people, events, transport history, and societies during the last sixty years. The scrapbook numbers more than 150 pages and is complementary to George Freeston's award winning scrapbook which appeared in the coronation year of 1953. The Society is to publish copies on both DVD and memory stick.

We have also had talks/presentations on 'Overlooked Northampton', 'the Kitchen Front', 'In Flora's Footsteps' and 'William Carey'.

I also attended the re-internment of the Saxon skeletons at Whitehall Farm in June. It felt good to be part of history and I enjoyed meeting all the people I have got to know over the years at the 'dig'.

James Aveling

BRINGTON HISTORY SOCIETY

Brington History Society has over 60 members drawn from Brington parish and adjoining areas. A "winter" programme of 7 meetings is held in the Reading Room, Great Brington, and is followed by 2 or 3 "summer" outings. The meetings and outings for 2012/2013 covered a wide range of topics including talks about John Clare; the battle of Northampton; and, the industrial history of Long Buckby. A full programme of talks has been arranged for 2013/2014 starting on September 16th when historian and university lecturer David Baldwin will be talking about the the enigmatic life of and the demise of Richard III.

Andrew Shaw

Secretary

BUGBROOKE HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society continues to meet every two months and we have had a varied and interesting range of talks and practical demonstrations. Some of the cures described from mediaeval medicine must have done more harm than good but it all depended on how strong your faith was in your apothecary! Our meetings are open to all as there is no formal membership list and no fee to attend. Our programme of meetings can be found in the village Link magazine or on the website www.bugbrookelink.co.uk/history.

Alan Kent

FRIENDS OF ALDERTON MONUMENTS (FOAM)

The activities of FOAM have mainly centred around The Mount, Alderton, a Norman Ringwork owned by me. Archaeological work was carried out on part of the site in 2009 and 2010 and a Ground Probing Radar Survey was done last year. I am aware of my own mortality, as I shall be 82 years old in August of this year, and I have been concerned about the future of The Mount when I finally shake off my mortal coils. I have therefore decided to sell my freehold interest in this Scheduled Ancient Monument but to impose two Restrictive Covenants, namely the monument shall be kept open to the public at all times, and archaeological work can take place at any time in the future subject to approval by English Heritage. It is likely that FOAM will be wound up but, if I am spared, I shall carry out further work on the site next year and will keep CLASP informed as I expect there to be a demand for volunteers.

Derek Batten

HARPOLE HERITAGE GROUP

In 2012 due to ill health, our plans to carry out investigations at Barn Close had to be cancelled, but we plan to visit the site in 2013.

Harpole Parish Council again gave us a grant of £1,000.00 which helps with our research etc., for which we are very grateful.

During the Autumn Winnie Clifton, owner of Barn Close, contacted me asking if I could supply details of the Barn Close Roman Villa site for her grandson who was preparing a project on the Romans for his school. I was pleased to send information, photographs and some 'finds' to him, for which I received a thank you letter. I bet there are not many boys who have a grandmother who owns the site of a Roman Villa!

Harpole Heritage Group have had several interesting speakers over the last year from "Old Toys" "Bells" "Drovers Road" "Canons Ashby" "Unmentionables" "Over Looked Northampton" "Police Archives" and the "Kitchen Front" I will be pleased to pass on contact details.

Over the years in Harpole we have had many celebrations and at our Annual Dinner several members looked back at some of the events from Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee right up to the present time. This proved to be very popular.

As a result of the talk on "Unmentionables" a group of our members visited the Costume Archive at the Northampton Central Museum and we also visited the Archive at Northampton General Hospital, both being very interesting.

As representative for Harpole I have attended all of the CLASP Organising Committee meetings, helped at the AGM and went to the re-internment of the Saxon Skeletons. It felt good to be part of History being made.

Jennifer Smith

HISTORY OF TIFFIELD SOCIETY

HOTS continues to meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 'The George'. Recent activities have included a fascinating talk on Roman gold mining techniques, an insight into Towcester museum, its founding and future plans, and 'a suffragette in the family' Pete Barratt provided a stirring and enthusiastic account of his great-grandmother's fight for the vote one hundred years ago.

In June, we had a fascinating presentation on the history of pub skittles by James Masters, of Masters Traditional Games, with an emphasis on Northamptonshire skittles and finished up with a 'killer' game –which was won by James.

We are looking forward to more interesting topics to come this year, including thatching, lace-making and bells and bell founding.

If you would like more information please contact me on 01327 350292 or our secretary, Sue Blackwell, on 01327 323181.

Steve Jowers

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARTEFACT RECOVERY CLUB

Yet again, the past year has been a very busy one indeed for our club members, with many important finds, including several treasure items and the discovery by club members of a new Roman site with a potential villa to excavate. A small fieldwalking sample by CLASP's Archaeological director Steve Young indicates occupation over a 300 year period. Coins recovered so far confirm this.

Club members have also been involved in delivering

- 14 talks to interested groups, with over 900 people in attendance.
- An afternoon talk to the assembled CLASP members, showing maps of findspots and the hidden pathways of mediaeval and tudor times.
- 2 events involving display and exhibition material, where many visitors took time to visit our tables.
- A loan of display material to CLASP, for an exhibition at Milton Keynes
- 5 events in support of Cynthia Spencer Hospice

Club members have

- continued to support the work at Whitehall,
- participated in a structured detecting survey in support of the Barby Hill project, and
- have recorded well over 800 finds this year with the PAS scheme.

So yet again it has been a very positive year for the Northamptonshire Artefact Recovery Club, and the next 12 months look just as interesting as we continue to enhance our excellent

reputation across the region. If your group would like our support, feel free to get in touch through the club website: www.narc.org.uk

Here's wishing all CLASP groups another successful 12 months in their endeavours.

Alan Standish

Chair

NORTON P.A.S.T. ANNUAL REPORT TO C.L.A.S.P.

The Team thrives; its arms embrace local archaeological ground-search and the exploration of our Village's past people's functions, habitats, movements, industries and final resting places.

The width of enquiry, though wide, by being closely focused in a small geographical area, permits consistent and in-depth study.

Establishing a picture of any settlement's past is to inter-relate its written history, landscape changes, architecture and archaeology.

Aided by the County's Archives and the guidance of C.L.A.S.P.'S Director, our Team's Consultant Archaeologist, the fragments of historical evidences are beginning to form an outline sketch of Norton's evolution. This outline, when related to similar outlines being drawn by C.L.A.S.P.'s assisting organisations is laying a foundation in West Northamptonshire on which, in times to come, a composite edifice of historical facts will result.

Presently, the vagaries of weather limit ground-search, and crops and cattle cover the agrarian landscape. Notwithstanding such happenings, the Team has submitted a quantity of finds for C.L.A.S.P.'s retention and several dozen coin and non-coin metal artefacts are receiving assessment and recording.

So far, the evidences of Norton's past are strongest in the Roman and Georgian periods, with the Medieval ages only evidenced by our parish church, a candle stick, and a few dozen low denomination coins that we have found since our formation nine years ago.

In time, something more of the intervening 1200 years may appear and so illuminate part of our past's dark hole. We hope so.

Francis Rodriguez-Veglio

On behalf of the Team

TOWCESTER AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY (TDLHS)

Monthly meetings continue to be well supported and the society is actively involved in participating in events organised by groups within Towcester.

Our away day this year was to Ironbridge Gorge Museums, where members had the opportunity to visit Blists Victorian Village and various other heritage sites.

In the autumn of 2012 a prestigious launch of the Victoria County History of Northamptonshire Volume VIII – Towcester Hundred was held. Our Chairman was invited to make a speech to endorse the fund raising activities and several members attended pledging their support.

The CBA's annual Festival of British Archaeology was held in July and TDLHS organised a guided walk to highlight the medieval aspects of Towcester. Over 100 people participated in this event. For further information relating to research carried out on historic Towcester please look-up *Facebook, Towcester History & Photographs*, and visit www.flickr.com/photos/lactoduro/sets.

Planning applications for sites at Moat Lane, Towcester Southern Extension and Wood Burcote Court have been commented upon. As part of the planning requirement, excavations are now underway on two of the major developments. Our main focus has been on the site at Moat Lane. At the request of TDLHS an open day was held by the excavators, Cotswold Archaeology, providing an opportunity for members and the local community to view the site. An interim report from Cotswold Archaeology has been circulated to CLASP members. Since then further interesting discoveries of masonry buildings have been made and the final report will be sent in due course. Trial trenches were excavated at Wood Burcote Court by Oxford Archaeology, revealing both Roman and medieval activity. The much larger Southern Extension housing scheme is still at the planning phase and we will continue to monitor the situation.

The Society's CLASP project Lactodorum Hinterland Survey has focused primarily on the Late Iron Age/Romano British settlement site at Burcote Wood Farm. A data base has been developed to record pottery findings, which currently stands at around 800 identified pots. The majority of these have been drawn to a high standard.

A summary report on the Towcester Vale Field 11, (which is part of the Southern Extension) field walking has been submitted to the Organising Committee and the NCC HER. A copy has also been sent to the Northamptonshire Planning Officer. The cumulative total of pottery and tile collected was 903. Only 4 sherds were Roman, 29 post medieval and 860 (96%) medieval, there was a single sherd of Saxon pottery. About a third of the medieval pottery was early Potterspury ware (13/14th century) and the other third was Banbury ware also 13/14th century.

WHITEHALL REVISITED: JUNE & JULY 2013

The Whitehall site was revisited to undertake the excavation of series of 1 metre sq. test pits in various areas around the Whitehall site; these areas were: - a) the 'sheep field' adjacent (West) to the villa site; b) the pasture further West (Whitehall Paddock) adjacent to that area where the Anglo-Saxon skeletons (shortly to be re-interred) were found and c) within the villa area.

The purpose of these separate excavations was:- In area a), to research an area in which previous magnetometer work had indicated boundaries and ditches. Area b) was initially subjected to a magnetometer study over 3 – 30sq. m. grids and, based on the findings of this study, it was planned to dig a series of test pits. Area c) was selected to investigate an area close to the villa where, in the past, there had been found several coins and to hopefully find traces of a boundary ditch.

During late June, in the first location (the 'sheep field'), three pits were opened penetrating ground which made reinforced concrete seem like a soft option. The pits went down to app. 90 cms. with fairly limited results.

However, one of these pits was later extended and provided a considerable source of materials.....



We had some 59 1st century pottery shards from one trench in the "sheep" field. Also in the trench, we found the ditch... finally! It is "double" at the point we dug which corresponds with the black blob on the geophysics survey. Its profile is steeper on the external side then gradual slope with a "dip" to the inside. The pottery was in the fill of the ditch.

In the second location, the Whitehall Paddock site (Area b), again in late June, we opened up 6 pits but 5 and 6 only really had their topsoil removed.

All except no. 3 were put over anomalies shown up in the earlier geophysical survey, but they all came to nothing.

No. 1 went down 50cms through topsoil and subsoil mixed with gravel onto orange clay.

No.2 was the most interesting; we took it down to 94cms and revealed a band of sand running E/W in the centre with fine pea gravel either side. Under the southern pea gravel we found burning which Steve thought to be natural and very ancient. There were also several bunters at the bottom of the N/S section

In no. 3 we encountered the edge of the rabbit warren in the sand at the bottom, and the remains of a long deceased rabbit.

No. 4 was exactly the same as no. 1 except there was no clay at the bottom. In all, rather disappointing.....but at least we know where things aren't!

There is the possibility for a re-match here, watch this space...



In mid – July, in the third location, (the villa site, Area c) was visited and eventually there were four pits opened, down to depths of 130cms. (or, to the depths of despair, if you prefer). Only one pit revealed much in the way of finds with fragments of pot and roof tile. The pottery and building material from this pit is said to be "Residual" and mainly 3rd Century.

Another pit penetrated a layer of wonderfully claggy, dark grey clay at about 100 cms. overlaying a sandy clay layer with chalk fragments and small pebbles.

RE-INTERMENT OF SAXON REMAINS AT WHITEHALL

On the subject of the re-interment of the Saxon remains, Lesley Allen kindly submitted the following report:-

On Wednesday 26th June, we all gathered, many wearing our Whitehall tee shirts, to bury the Saxon remains first discovered.....Among the crowd were some of the original 'finders' wishing to see the Saxons reburied at last. Sandra & Beryl had lovingly made woollen bags to hold the remains. Steve had provided some replica grave goods, Nick had organised a deep trench to be dug in a quiet corner of the field nearest to original burial site, and the vicar of Nether Heyford, Ann Slater, conducted a simple short service. Harry Young filmed the proceedings as the final part of his University project, which included interviews with some members of the Whitehall Tuesday group, during the many discussions on which format the reburial should take.



The deep trench was filled in by willing volunteers and within 2 hours the turf was back, the sheep were grazing the site and the Saxons were back where they belonged.

