



CLASP

Community Landscape &
Archæology Survey Project

NEWSLETTER

Website: www.claspweb.org.uk

Charity No 1111667



Local Heritage *initiative* August 2010, Issue 12

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will be held on Wednesday, September 15th in Paulersbury Village Hall starting at 7.00 pm; see page 2 for further details and the agenda, page 3 for the public meeting to follow.

From Jeremy Cooper, your Organising Committee Acting-Chairman

Summer is nearly over and the Autumn fieldwalking season looms. Watch the Members' Area of the CLASP website, the Yahoo Group, and CLASP phone for information about opportunities to get your boots muddy. CLASP continues to expand, with two more organisations joining since the last newsletter; a big welcome to both Tiffield and NARC.

Autumn also brings the CLASP AGM and Open Meeting on September 15th at Paulerspury. This promises to be a most interesting evening, and I hope you will be able to join us.

Steve and I have been working on reporting online more findings from the Local People-Local Past project - so keep an eye on that via the CLASP website. Last but not least, please do all you can to help us raise the £3,000 we need to buy a magnetometer: this would be a major step forward in our capabilities. Dave explains all in his report.

Jeremy Cooper

Report from Dave Hayward, the Secretary of the Organising Committee

Report from the Organising Committee Secretary

Another six months has passed and now that the dust is settling after the Whitehall month I am starting to get my head around some other issues.

cont page 4

Page 1

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 15th September 2010
7.00 pm at Paulerspury Village Hall,
High Street, Paulerspury, Northants, NN12 7NA

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the last AGM, September 15th 2009
4. Matters arising
5. Chairman's Report
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Acceptance of Annual Report*
8. Appointment of Trustees**
9. Appointment of Officers: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer
10. AOB

*Printed copies of the Annual Report will be available at the meeting, but members wishing to read it beforehand will find it on the CLASP website from 9 September 2010.

** Please note that nominations for appointment to the Trustees must be received by the Secretary before the AGM. (R. Downie, 21 Stacey Avenue, Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5DN).

The nomination must be signed by a member entitled to vote at the AGM, ie a member of CLASP or an organisation approved by the Trustees. It must state the member's intention to propose the appointment of a person as a Trustee and must be signed by that person to confirm that they are willing to serve.



CLASP

Community Landscape & Archaeology Survey Project

PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday 15th September 2010, 7.30pm
(following the AGM at 7pm)

The Landscapes of Governance

A three-year interdisciplinary research project bringing archaeology, place-names and written sources together in a national study of early medieval assembly sites

A talk by Dr John Baker BA, PhD.

Research Fellow, Institute of Name-Studies, Nottingham University

also

Update on CLASP fieldwork

A talk by Stephen Young

University of Northampton, Archaeological Director for CLASP

Admission FREE
but donations to CLASP
will be welcome

Paulerspury Village Hall*
High Street
Paulerspury
NN12 7NA

Raffle, tea/coffee, display stands

www.claspweb.org.uk

*previously advertised as Potterspury, in error.

cont from page 1

Firstly welcome to our two new member societies, Northampton Artefact Recovery Club and History of Tiffield Society. The diversity of interest of these two groups will undoubtedly strengthen CLASP. They are both new and appear to me to have youthful energy!

CLASP has been awarded £5,000 by Northampton Community Foundation towards the cost of purchasing a magnetometer to enable us to carry out our own geophysical surveys. Currently we are seeking ways to raise the £3,000 balance needed to complete this project. Any suggestions as to funding sources would be appreciated as would any donations towards the cost of purchase. If this project is successful we intend to have three or four volunteers trained in the use of the machine, they will then cascade this training down to other members to enable a far wider use of the equipment. The Archaeological Director and I intend to meet within the next month to prepare a programme of fieldwalking and other CLASP activities for the autumn months. I am aware that there are still outstanding finds that need processing and these will be considered in our discussions. Once finalised, they will be published on the website. The CLASP telephone details will also be available at the AGM/ Open Meeting.

The main speaker at the Open Meeting will be Dr John Baker, a Research Fellow at the Institute of Place-Names at Nottingham University who will speak on an inter-disciplinary research project that he is involved with at University College London entitled the Landscapes of Governance. This project is bringing archaeology, place-names and written sources together in a national study of early medieval assembly sites. CLASP is providing information to the project regarding known and possible meeting places in west Northamptonshire. More details regarding this project can be seen at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/project/assembly/>. If anybody has any information, even suspicion, regarding these meeting places in their area please pass the information to me by email at davensal@hywd1.fsnet.co.uk.

Just to finish with, I am still looking for someone to assume this role of Secretary, even if it is just to take the minutes at the five to six annual meetings. If you are interested, again please email me at the address above. I really wish to have more time available to enable me to carry out research into various projects in our area that hopefully will, in due course, make more work for the membership.

Dave Hayward

The view from Steve Young, Archaeological Director

We are moving towards the completion of Phase 2 of the Heritage Lottery funded scheme Local People: Local Past. The total grant of £25,000 for the two projects was our largest donation and has enabled us to initiate and pursue the recording and characterisation of the locality for the Roman period. In the process it has also helped to develop within our community an archaeological infrastructure and network capable of responding to some of the pressing challenges facing the preservation and interpretation of the past. The project has demonstrated that there is a role for local people in the investigation of the archaeology of their area and that an inclusive approach can be very effective. A direct benefit of the work has been the construction of a far more detailed understanding of the material and structural remains of the locality and the creation of a hypothetical model to explain their development during the Roman era. It has also established the hypothesis that locality is a keystone in the analysis of Romanization and that this phenomenon can be profiled archaeologically. This is a crucial breakthrough for the way research will be conducted in the future and will affect the nature of the theories scholars promote based on the evidence becoming available.

Over the last five years this funding has allowed us to investigate a significant sample of the Romano-British settlement across nineteen parishes between Daventry, Northampton and Towcester. We have undertaken complete or partial intensive field survey or reconnaissance of over twenty sites. It has enabled us to pursue a coherent and ground breaking methodological approach to fieldwork that is capable of engaging with the aspirations of current archaeological agendas. By integrating and utilising geophysical, field walking and metal detecting survey in a systematic way we have assembled a bank of evidence and statistical data which has been seldom rivalled in any archaeological sphere. However this doesn't mean that we have exhausted the potential for new fieldwork and recording. The pending acquisition of our own geophysical equipment and the recruitment of new societies to CLASP indicate a growing interest in a proactive involvement. This means that potentially, thanks to new and existing links, in the future we could be exploring in varying degrees of detail upwards of fifty sites across thirty parishes associated with the Roman Landscape. This is virtually unprecedented in Roman Britain and is comparable to only a few long term research projects and professionally based projects. I have no doubt that this will enable us thoroughly to characterise and compare the Roman settlement and landscape of our locality in relation to both the hinterland of Bannaventa and Lactodorum. It will also help us to refine the indicative archaeological criteria that symbolise the occupation of our locality and provide a tried and tested approach for application elsewhere by other community archaeological groups.

cont on page 6



During June and July the Whitehall Farm Roman villa excavation was resumed. The focus of the excavation remained the uncovering and recording of Bath house 2 although extensive work was undertaken on the site of the proto villa which was first investigated in 2001 and is scheduled to be recovered by plough soil later this autumn. There are two major and unique finds to emerge from the excavation: the

first being the uncovering of a tessellated pavement in Room 5 of the bath house and the second the discovery of two large reused wooden roof rafters or trusses which had been utilised as ‘revetting’ in the bank adjacent to the exterior wall of Rooms 2 and 3. It is difficult to interpret their purpose in the construction and maintenance of Bath house 2 but their possible contribution to understanding roof structure could be immense. These wooden timbers are also of importance because they are extremely rare survivals in the archaeological remains of Roman villa complexes. At the moment I do not know of another example of timber rafters surviving anywhere else on a rural site in Roman Britain.

The tessellated pavement is an unadorned plain mosaic floor that lined the interior of a connecting room that lay between the heated rooms of the bath house and other areas of the facility. About 75% of the pavement remains in situ and it is the first surviving mosaic to be located at Whitehall Farm. It is also the first almost intact tessellated pavement to be uncovered in our area for over a hundred years apart from a small fragment of the re-excavated border of another mosaic found in 1990. The greater part of this original mosaic was first excavated in 1699 on the neighbouring villa complex at Horestone Brook which appears in an engraving of 1712 in Morton’s History of Northampton. The nature of the agricultural regime of this part of Northamptonshire and the systematic robbing of sites during enclosure, mainly in the late 18th century and probably for the construction of farm buildings and road maintenance, has destroyed many of the mosaic pavements that once may have existed making the survival of this one even more remarkable.

cont on page 7



The wooden roof trusses however are virtually unique in a Roman archaeological context and as such are very unusual survivals. These rafters were not part of the roof of Bath house 2 but appear to be reused after being salvaged from another structure elsewhere on the site in Roman times. We intend to lift and examine both wooden rafters in the autumn when the site will be covered for the winter. This will provide us with an opportunity to investigate the various wood working marks and joints cut into each of the rafter. Hopefully this will provide some extremely interesting details about the construction of timber roofs in Roman Britain. At this stage it is too early to make a decision about employing dendro-chronology to date these roof timbers but this will be considered as we try to record and conserve both rafters.

We were unable to establish the full extent of Bath house 2 but can confirm that the building has at least six rooms of which three are furnished with hypocausts. The footings of a new room to the south of Room 4 might indicate a tower at this end of bath house. This would have been useful for a water tank to hold the necessary reservoir of water for supplying the baths. Meanwhile the rooms to the east of Room 4 could well be part of a range associated with the *apoditerium* (changing room) and *fridgiarium* (cold room). We will only ascertain their overall size and possible function after excavating them next year. Another interesting development was the location and partial excavation of a 'sunken' room attached to and immediately east of room 2 which may yet turn out to be a cold plunge bath. Several coins and other artefacts were recovered, notably an iron axe head and an elaborate worked bone hairpin.



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cont page 8

Meanwhile the re-examination of the site of the proto villa enabled us to look afresh at the initial record of the earlier excavation and to see if there were any omissions or errors made. Work on the proto villa offered the perfect opportunity to test our recording techniques and processes especially as this area of the excavation was undertaken in the formative phase of the project and possibly may have been open to error. Our new investigation revealed that our initial observations had been correct and that the basic interpretation of the development of the area had been accurately recorded. However we were able to add to that record and confirm the chronological development of the building and features located here. It is now apparent that the Proto villa, a timber framed building aligned northwest to southwest with a possible veranda on its north side, was the first structure to be erected in this area. The building had been erected on a levelled plateau just below the brow of the hill and appears to have been in use from the mid to late 1st century AD. We know the structure had been dismantled and gone out of use by the late 1st to early 2nd century because a series of pits had been dug into the floor sealing the occupation layers and a series of field ditches had also been cut across the site. Unfortunately trial trenching of a second building platform failed to produce any collaborative evidence as the site of the building identified during the geophysical survey had been severely eroded through modern ploughing.

The field boundary ditches were present as anomalies on the geophysical survey and were confirmed through excavation. These field boundaries continued in use throughout the 2nd century AD and judging by the material deposited in the fill eventually they went out of use at some stage in the 3rd century. This is probably to be associated with the construction phase of the perimeter bank and ditch of the late 3rd century villa complex which bisects this area. The imposition of the villa and its associated features on the earlier field system made the system redundant. This enforced the demise of the field drainage ditches and gradual or premeditated infill of them as landscape features. The large perimeter ditch of the villa enclosure appears to have survived into the 5th century AD until finally re-filling and going out of use in the mid 6th century as the existence of early Anglo Saxon pottery in the fill demonstrates. A fine brooch and two rings were recovered from the features in the area as well as very good indicative assemblages of pottery from the different phases of ditch boundaries.

cont page 9

It is also interesting to note that work from a different period has been undertaken at Alderton. Derek Batten (FOAM) has informed me that this year's excavation on the medieval castle was quite successful and significant in understanding the overall development of the site. The footings of at least two stone walls were revealed and some fragments of stain glass recovered. These findings indicate buildings of status as well as potentially longer use of the site.

Finally several different strands of fieldwork appear to becoming together and I hope this coming year will offer further opportunities to get involved....so keep your eyes open for details and make use of the CLASP hotline.

Harpole Heritage Group

In the spring of this year, the group was able to place on display at Harpole Primary School Roman artifacts found in Harpole Two. These included several Roman coins, a broach, a greyware dish, a Samien dish, a lemon squeezer, window glass and several other items. Also on display were a number of photographs and a map of other Roman sites in the area. The above items are on loan to the school, but still the property of the landowner.

Harpole Heritage Group was ten years old in 2009 and as part of its celebrations, had a half- log seat erected on Callawell Hill. Many walkers pass this way and the Group hopes that they will pause a while and enjoy the view.

Jennifer Smith

Norton, Northamptonshire, Portable Antiquities Search Team

The Team, now in its seventh year, has a record of considerable achievement which continues to be built upon. Members continue to facilitate searches in the wider area of our district, whilst maintaining their chief focus and modus operandi in Norton's environs.

Our partnership in CLASP in its reciprocal objective of searching and re-searching evidences of the Roman and Romano-British occupation in this part of Northamptonshire, continues very satisfactorily. The Team is also glad to have opportunity to assist CLASP in metal surveys wherever such help is requested.

cont page10

That the large number of Roman artefacts found by us enhances CLASP's research records, in turn enlarging the knowledge of our local history, is reward indeed. Our finds, which cover the spectrum of our area's civilisation, all recorded nationally for posterity, are the bench-mark of our interest, discretion and competence.

Northampton Artefact Recovery Club

As a new group to the CLASP community, we are pleased to be invited to submit a few news items to the regular CLASP newsletter. NARC was formed in May 2010 and has rapidly become regarded as the number 1 Artefact Recovery Club, in the area with a website launched on July 1st 2010.

Website Information - www.narc.org.uk

On Saturday the 17th July at 11.37 am, we became the UK's number 1 metal detecting website, according to the 'metal detecting top listed' website. We are getting web traffic from all parts of the world including visits from India, South Africa, Europe and the USA! Well done to all concerned in planning, designing and contributing to the successful website. We hope you all enjoy it. If you want to see our latest position, click on the Top-Listed symbol in the left hand column. Once you have seen the position, click on our name to exit the Top-Listed website.

Whitehall Villa and Preston Capes, 2010 Village Fete

In only our third month of existence, NARC was delighted to be able to accept two invitations to work on the Whitehall Villa project and to exhibit at the Preston Capes Village Fete. You can read a full report of these events in the Reports section of the website. Thanks to all involved for a superb exhibition, well over 300 people passed through the hall in less than 2 hours.

Local Village History

We have added to the website, documents recording life in five local villages during 1874. You will find Barby, Badby, Charwelton, Everdon and Preston Capes, listed in the Research section.

cont page 11

Mediaeval Fayre site

As a club, we are actively involved in searching for a Mediaeval Fayre site, in conjunction with a local village history group. Working closely together, we have provided the group with detection training sessions. These have been well received and are fast becoming an added feature and resource that the group can call upon in its search for the Fayre site.and finally

Garrett the Parrot

One of our newer members has an African Grey parrot called Blossom. She has an extensive repertoire of sounds she can imitate, although we have now been told that she may have to be renamed Garrett the Parrot because she has added the sound of a Garrett 'pin pointer' to her list!

Alan Standish

Chair

List of Associations for Events in the CLASP Newsletter

Organisation	Contact	Tel
Norton, Northampton PAST	Francis Rodrigues-Veglio	01327 872030
Weedon Bec History Society	Julia Johns	01327 341729
Flore Heritage Society	John Smith	01327 340387
Brington History Society	Andrew Shaw	01604 770668
Harpole Heritage Group	Jennifer Smith	01604 831294
Whitehall Farm Roman Villa Landscape Project	Brian Culling	01327 340504
Towcester & District Local History Society	Gina Boreham	01327 352687
Bugbrooke History Society	Alan Kent	01604 830518
Daventry Local History Group	Angela Adams	01327 704928
Blisworth Heritage Society	Diana Burgoine	01604 858406
Friends of Alderton Monuments	Derek Batten	01327 811304
History of Tiffield Society	Steve Jowers	01327 350292
Northampton Artefact Recovery Club	Alan Standish	Not available

Table of Events for CLASP Groups

Dates	Time	Event	Location	Group
Meet every 2 months. See www.bugbrokelink.co.uk/history or contact Alan Kent, tel: 01604 830518				Bugbrooke History Society
Sept 8	7.30 pm	'The Courtier and the Queen'	Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Sept 9	7.30 pm	'Fawsley and the Knightly Family'	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Sept 20	8.00 pm	'A Suffragette in the Family'	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Sept 24	7.30 pm	'Memories of Blisworth'	Blisworth Village Hall, Stoke Road	Blisworth History Society
Sept 27	7.30 pm	'The Life and Times of the Culworth Gang'	Chapel Schoolroom, New Street	Weedon Bec History Society
Oct 4	7.45 pm	'Lost Villages of Northamptonshire'	Chapel Schoolroom, Chapel Lane	Flore Heritage Society
Oct 13	7.30 pm	'Magical Mechanical Music'	Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Oct 14	7.30 pm	'Looking Back at the History of Harpole'	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Oct 18	8.00 pm	'The Hunt for Jack the Ripper'	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Oct 20	7.30 pm	Shops Exhibition Review	Daventry Town Council Offices, 3 New Street	Daventry Local History Group
Oct 23	All day event	NAHL Heritage Day (by Ticket only)	Old School Hall, lunch at the Methodist Chapel	Harpole Heritage Group
Oct 25	7.30 pm	'Remember, Remember the Fifth of November'	Chapel Schoolroom, New Street	Weedon Bec History Society
Oct 29	7.30 pm	'Those Coaching Days'	Blisworth Village Hall, Stoke Road	Blisworth History Society
Nov 3	7.45 pm	'The English Longbow'	Chapel Schoolroom, Chapel Lane	Flore Heritage Society

Table of Events for CLASP Groups

Dates	Time	Event	Location	Group
Nov 10	7.30 pm	'A Mariner's Look at History'	The Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Nov 11	7.30 pm	Annual Dinner	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Nov 15	8.00 pm	Social, Brington Museum of Mystery Objects	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Nov ??	7.30 pm	Shops in Daventry Exhibition	Daventry Town Council Museum	Daventry Local History Group
Nov 17	7.30 pm	'A Local Hero? William Rhodes'	Daventry Town Council Offices, North Street	Daventry Local History Group
Nov 26	7.30 pm	'Locality Settlement, Landscape & Roman Blisworth & Area'	Blisworth Village Hall, Stoke Road	Blisworth History Society
Nov 29	7.30 pm	'Weedon in the Imperial Landscape'	Chapel Schoolroom, New Street	Weedon Bec History Society
Dec 1	7.45 pm	Dinner	The Old Sun Nether Heyford	Flore Heritage Society
Dec 8	7.30 pm	Christmas Social Evening	The Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Dec 12	2 - 4 pm	Christmas Social, mince pies & mulled wine	Blisworth Village Hall, Stoke Road	Blisworth History Society
Jan 12	7.30 pm	'On and Off the Footplate'	The Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Jan 13	7.30 pm	'Walter Tull'	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Jan 17	8.00 pm	'Looking Back', residents reminisce	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Jan 24	7.30 pm	'Norton Hall & its Residents'	Chapel Schoolroom, New Street	Weedon Bec History Society
Feb 2	7.45 pm	'Sir Christopher Hatton'	Chapel Schoolroom, Chapel Lane	Flore Heritage Society

Table of Events for CLASP Groups

Dat	Time	Event	Location	Group
Feb 9	7.30 pm	'Black History of Northamptonshire'	The Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Feb 10	7.30 pm	'The Battle of Britain'	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Feb 21	8.00 pm	'Norton Hall & its Residents'	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Mar 2	7.45 pm	'What's under your Fields?'	Chapel Schoolroom, Chapel Lane	Flore Heritage Society
Mar 9	7.30 pm	Annual General Meeting	The Riverside Centre, Islington Road	Towcester & District Local History Society
Mar 10	7.30 pm	'Bells of Loughborough'	Methodist Chapel, School Lane	Harpole Heritage Group
Mar 21	8.00 pm	'The History of Brewing'	The Reading Room, Great Brington	Brington History Society
Mar 28	7.30 pm	'Werburgh of Weedon'	Chapel Schoolroom, New Street	Weedon Bec History Society

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

The Deadline for the next issue is Sunday night, February 20th.
 Contributions to Tony Johns, 7 Eton Close, Weedon, Northants, NN7 4PJ
 or by email: tony@tonyjohs.co.uk. Please supply any photographs or
 drawings to accompany articles as separate files. Resolution around 250 -
 300 dpi. Tel contact: 01327 341729