

CLASP

Community Landscape Archaeology
Survey Project
Sixth Annual Report



2010

Alan Watson
Chair of the Trustees

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Sixth Annual Report for the Year Ending 31st August 2010 The Trustees

Introduction by the Chair of the Trustees - Alan Watson

Once again another year has passed by and we are still looking for a building that would be suitable to store all our artefacts from our digs, field walking and test pits. We have agreed that this would be a "store" rather than a "museum" open to the general public. We do not have the man power or finances to staff such a facility.

Finding such a store is still our prime objective. We are following up various leads and it is hoped that something may come from them. If anyone knows of a building that might suit, either long term or short term, please do not hesitate to contact us a.s.a.p.

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. I would like especially to put on record my thanks to

- Ruth Downie, Trustee & Trustee secretary, for all her hard work over the past 5 years. Ruth is moving to the West Country very soon and so she will not be standing for re-election in either role. Ruth will be sorely missed.
- Dave Hayward, Secretary of the Organising Committee, for all his work in successfully applying for grants towards the purchasing of a Magnetometer. There is still more funding needed to reach our target of £8,000. More of this will be found in Dave's report.

We have applied for a grant to reprint the Whitehall Roman Villa training manual as the Clasp Training Manual. We are still waiting to hear yes or no.

CLASP has been nominated for the Heritage Alliance Heroes Award (see <http://www.heritagelink.org.uk/2010/06/23/heritage-alliance-heroes-award-2010/>), by the Community Archaeology Support Officer for the Council for British Archaeology. When notifying us of this nomination she said "I have heard on the grapevine that there are quite a few nominations from all types of heritage areas (e.g. transport heritage) so I was keen to get some archaeological representation in. The important thing with the nominations is that they represent voluntary involvement in heritage, and is held in high regard – so I thought CLASP would be an ideal candidate!"

This year we have welcomed three more societies to CLASP. They are:

- The Northampton Artefact Recovery Club
- The History of Tiffield Society
- FOAM - Friends of Alderton Monuments

This brings our society membership to 13.

Our Strategic Planning Document is at last moving towards "completion".

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. Unfortunately I am unable to attend the AGM but Nick Adams has agreed to take the chair for this meeting – thank you Nick.

Alan Watson
Chair of the Trustees
August 2010

Report of Secretary to the Trustees

Who are the Trustees?

CLASP has eight Trustees who were appointed at the 2009 AGM:

Alan Watson – Chair
Angela Evans – Treasurer
Stephen Young – Archaeological Director
Ruth Downie – Secretary
Nick Adams
Jeremy Calderwood
Sandra Deacon
Tony Kesten

Their period of office expires at the end of the 2010 AGM but they are eligible for re-election. New Trustees will be appointed at the AGM and there is no limit to the number appointed or reappointed. If you are interested in becoming a Trustee please contact Alan Watson on 01327 340470 or by email: alan(at)alanwatson.demon.uk

Trustees must be a member of CLASP or the nominated representative of an organisation that is a member of CLASP

What do the Trustees do?

The Trustees meet four or five times a year...

- to advance the education of the public in the subject of Archaeology, in particular but not exclusively, in West Northamptonshire (Extract from CLASP Charity Constitution)
- to manage the business of the Charity and review the work undertaken by the CLASP Organising Committee
- to consider requests for financial aid/or expenditure from the CLASP sub-groups.
- to keep aware of the various sources of funding available and to make applications where possible.

Ruth Downie
Secretary to the Trustees
September 2010

Auditor'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 2010, which are set out on the attached page.

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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:
13 July 2010

Finance Reports

CLASP Treasurer's Report AGM 2010

I have tried to make the Accounts summary self explanatory.

We received no money from Harpole Parish council this year as the Harpole projects already had money in hand. Their biggest expenditures this year has been buying storage boxes and coin processing.

Due to the country's financial crisis interest on our Bank balance has taken a nose dive and Insurance has increased over £20.

Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project

Receipts & Expenditure Account for Year Ending 31 March 2010

<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
B/f from 31.03.09 Bank	7,226.93
Pd not on Statement	-384.27
Cash in Hand	21.71
Harpole Parish Council	0.00
History Societies	90.00
Other Donations	127.50
Membership fees	355.00
Bank Interest	8.53
Profit from AGM	76.29
Sale of T Shirt	5.00
	Affiliation Fees
	Insurance
	Other
7,526.69	1,339.23
	Bank Statement
	Cash in Hand
	Paid not yet on Statement
	7,526.69
At the year end then, the Harpole balance	£799.52
Roman Research Trust	£2,500.00
Countryside Agency	£2,014.44
Money raised by ourselves	£873.50
Thus usable funds	<u>£6,187.46</u>

Income

Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project - Accounts 2009/10		Charity No 1111667		16/04/2010				
		C'side	History	Other	M'ship			
		Total	Agency	Harpole PC	Societies	Fees	Other	£
b/f	Bank Statement	7,226.93						7,226.93
b/f	Paid not on statement	-384.27						-384.27
b/f	Cash in Hand	21.71						21.71
03.04.09	Bank Interest	0.72					0.72	0.72
09.04.09	C J Wood	5.00				5.00		5.00
18.05.09	Alan Clark cash	5.00				5.00		5.00
18.05.09	LS Hack/E Rose/Bugbrooke History Group	20.00		10.00		10.00		20.00
18.05.09	C A Morton*/J&M Aveling*/C Dowding*	40.00			20.00	20.00		40.00
18.05.09	J & P Lowes	10.00				10.00		10.00
18.05.09	R W Whyte	5.00				5.00		5.00
05.06.09	Bank Interest	0.70					0.70	0.70
05.06.09	Bank Interest	0.80					0.80	0.80
31.07.09	Mrs K Stevenson	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
31.07.09	Martin Joice/G Eyles+G Harvey	15.00				15.00		15.00
05.08.09	Bank Interest	0.64					0.64	0.64
01.09.09	Bank Interest	0.75					0.75	0.75
01.09.09	J Johns/A H Evans/Colin Evans cash	15.00				15.00		15.00
01.09.09	Harpole Heritage Group	25.00		25.00				25.00
01.09.09	J Smith	5.00				5.00		5.00
01.09.09	L M Crane	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
01.09.09	MH Caine/CM Sharp/AJ Smith/PM Knight chq	20.00				20.00		20.00
01.09.09	JJ Cooper B Evans Rees/RW Whyte	15.00				15.00		15.00
01.09.09	NR Gamett/Jeremy Calderwood	20.00			10.00	10.00		20.00
08.09.09	Anthony Kesten	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
16.09.09	Profit AGM Raffle	67.00					67.00	67.00
16.09.09	Refreshments Profit AGM	9.29					9.29	9.29
16.09.09	Blisworth Heritage Society Donation Cash	10.00		10.00				10.00
16.09.09	R Harrison chq	25.00			20.00	5.00		25.00
16.09.09	M McIntosh/ S Deacon/G Boreham chqs	15.00				15.00		15.00
16.09.09	P Garner/JA Smith chqs	10.00				10.00		10.00
16.09.09	A & P Watson chq	10.00				10.00		10.00
16.09.09	R Conlon cash	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
16.09.09	B Culling Cash	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
16.09.09	B & R Vowles/J Baxter/F Kay cash	20.00				20.00		20.00
16.09.09	J Hefford/D Hayward/S Waterhouse cash	15.00				15.00		15.00
16.09.09	N Adams cash	5.00				5.00		5.00
16.09.09	C J Evans Chq in lieu of cash £100							0.00
02.10.09	LJ Allen	10.00			5.00	5.00		10.00
02.10.09	Bugbrooke History Society (Halifax)	20.00		20.00				20.00
02.10.09	G Biddle	5.00				5.00		5.00
02.10.09	A & P Chapman	20.00			10.00	10.00		20.00
02.10.09	Dr M Boxer	5.00				5.00		5.00
02.10.09	DJ Batten (FOAM)	20.00			20.00			20.00
04.09.09	Bank Interest	0.68					0.68	0.68
26.10.09	D Cottrell cash	5.00				5.00		5.00
26.10.09	A & G Priestley/A & L Newman/G Fleuchar	25.00				25.00		25.00
28.10.09	A R Gray	5.00				5.00		5.00
26.10.09	G Hearne	20.00			15.00	5.00		20.00
26.10.09	M Coward Postal Order	6.50			1.50	5.00		6.50
29.10.09	Sale of Clasp T Shirt	5.00					5.00	5.00
29.10.09	Marcus Lewis cash	5.00				5.00		5.00
29.10.09	R Downie/S Spencer	10.00				10.00		10.00
29.10.09	J H S Craig	6.00			1.00	5.00		6.00
04.11.09	Bank Interest	0.67					0.67	0.67
04.11.09	C J Wiggins	5.00				5.00		5.00
03.11.09	CR Davenport	5.00				5.00		5.00
13.11.09	Mr CG Wood	5.00				5.00		5.00
19.11.09	C J Evans chq £50 in lieu of cash							0.00
5.11.09	Bank Interest	0.76					0.76	0.76
21.01.10	Mr Athony Marsh	5.00				5.00		5.00
4.12.09	Bank Interest	0.67					0.67	0.67
05.01.10	Bank Interest	0.75					0.75	0.75
14.02.10	Flore Heritage Society	25.00		25.00				25.00
14.02.10	MC Crozier	5.00				5.00		5.00
05.02.10	Bank Interest	0.73					0.73	0.73
05.03.10	Bank Interest	0.66					0.66	0.66

7,526.69 0.00 0.00 90.00 127.50 355.00 89.82 7,526.69

16/04/2010

			LP-LP										
			Total	Archive Materials	Field Centre	Finds Processing	Geophys Survey	Website/ Travel	Office Expenser	Committee Costs	Conting'cy Room Hire	Affiliation Other	Harpole Fees
19.05.09	Council for British Archaeology	Ord	35.00									35.00	35.00
19.05.09	Weardon Beck Village Hall Man Comm	Ord	47.40								47.40		47.40
01.06.09	Dr M P Weaver re Coins x2 192+28	CA	220.00				220.00						220.00
06.07.09	Display board sundries re Harpole csh	H	18.32									18.32	18.32
06.07.09	Pattishall Graphic Design/JCooper cs Ord		15.00					15.00					15.00
08.07.09	B Vowles for Trowels re Harpole	H	34.50									34.50	34.50
01.09.09	Sept 2009 Newsletter costs	Ord	46.04					46.04					46.04
01.09.09	2 Org Comm meetings Jun/Sept csh Ord		10.00						10.00				10.00
08.09.09	P & P Toilet Hire	H	60.00									60.00	60.00
17.09.09	Dr M Weaver - coins processing	H	136.00									136.00	136.00
21.09.09	M K Heritage Assoc	Ord	10.00								10.00		10.00
20.02.10	Re School - 'Roman Display' csh	H	3.60									3.60	3.60
20.02.10	2 Org Comm meetings Nov/Fab csh Ord		10.00						10.00				10.00
20.02.10	T Keston - Tapes re Label Machine	Ord	33.85			33.85							33.85
31.03.10	AG Johns - March newsletter	Ord	17.90					17.90					17.90
31.03.10	NALH subscription	Ord	10.00									10.00	10.00
31.03.10	TRS Fareham Insurance	Ord	213.50								213.50		213.50
31.03.10	Whitehall Roman Villa - boxes	H	412.13									412.13	412.13
31.03.10	Re Burns Close pd cash	H	5.99									5.99	5.99
31.03.10	Harpole sundries	H											
<hr/>													
• Latest Bank Statement			1,339.23	0.00	0.00	253.85	0.00	78.94	0.00	0.00	20.00	260.90	55.00
• Banked not yet on Statement				6,840.90									670.54
• Paid Not on Statement				-653.53									1,339.23
• Cash in Hand				0.09			Actual Funds		6,187.46				
				7,526.69									

A breakdown of these figures is available from the Secretary on request.

Archaeological Director's Report 2010

(also published in CLASP newsletter)

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 characterization 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 utilizing 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 rivaled 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.

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.

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 *apodyterium* (changing room) and *frigidarium* (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.

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 leveled 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 refilling 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.

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 stained 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.

Stephen Young



Reports from the Organising Committee

Report from Acting Chair of the Organising Committee

The Organising Committee has been swelled by two new member organisations, and expects (as I write) at least one more to join in the near future. CLASP really is spreading its wings! The story of funding-raising for the magnetometer and the interest shown in learning to use it demonstrate further that we are recognised as a credible organisation with a wealth of interest and enthusiasm to deploy.

Once again I will use my ration of words to draw attention to the opportunities for people to get involved in running CLASP. As "Acting Chair" of the Organising Committee I am still confining my committee work to chairing meetings and taking the odd, relatively minor, decisions that need to be taken from time to time as Chair's actions. The hope is still that someone will emerge to take on the substantive role of leading and inspiring the Organising Committee - or, perhaps I should say, to share that role with Dave Hayward who fills it at the moment. Which brings us to the now perennial appeal...

We are still looking for someone, or several people, to take over the purely Secretarial work from Dave so that he can concentrate on CLASP's advocacy activities and the research projects which lie closest to his archaeological heart. He really has done more than his fair share of admin and secretarial work for CLASP over the years, and a volunteer (or volunteers) to take over his Secretarial role will be welcomed with open arms and given any support they need to get started.

Remember that joining the Organising Committee does not entail the onerous legal responsibilities shouldered by the CLASP Charity Trustees – we are simple country folk working at the sharp end of archaeology, concerned with the nitty gritty of digging up the past and recording our findings. Please offer your services if you feel at all inclined.

Jeremy Cooper
August 2010

Report by the Secretary of the Organising Committee

I am pleased to report that CLASP now has thirteen society members. What is pleasing is the spread of interests from these groups from pure archaeological groups to local heritage, history and metal detecting. I am sure that this spread of interest will enhance the strength of CLASP in the future. Hopefully we will see groups providing mutual support to other groups in areas such as technical knowledge, manpower, speakers to name but a few areas.

Having had a preview of Derek Batten's article for the Friends of Alderton Monument it strikes me that CLASP and its members are being instrumental in revising the existing concept of history in the west of Northamptonshire. The work done to date through the Local People-Local Past Project has totally enhanced the picture of Romano-British activity and that at Alderton may well change the view of Norman settlement. Possibly that being undertaken at Whitehall will enhance the knowledge of early Anglo Saxon activity as well.

At the time of writing I am able to report that CLASP has been awarded £5000 by Northamptonshire Community Foundation towards the purchase of a magnetometer. We now have to raise the £3000 balance before the end of November. It is important that we obtain this equipment as it will enable us to undertake our own geophysical surveys thereby saving large sums of money which can then be diverted to other activities. Any donation towards the cost of this would be appreciated. If we do manage to purchase the magnetometer and you would be interested in carrying out magnetometer surveys please inform your society representative on the Organising Committee or if an individual member contact me at davensal@hywd1.fsnet.co.uk

I am also pleased to report that the CBA (Council for British Archaeology) have, from all the community archaeology groups in the country, nominated CLASP for the Heritage Alliance Heroes Award 2010. Nominees are from all aspects of heritage from railway preservation to building conservation and archaeology. The awards represent voluntary involvement in heritage and are held in high regard. Full details can be seen at <http://www.heritagelink.org.uk/2010/06/23/heritage-alliance-heroes-award-2010/> .

Judgement day is in late September.

I have previously reported on the submissions that we made to the three major planning applications and subsequent appeals at Daventry. These have now been finalised and only the smallest at Monksmoor has been successful. CLASP does have an agreement to become involved with this project when work eventually commences. The other bonus from this work is the amount of work that has been done by the developers to investigate the archaeology of the area, work that would otherwise have not been undertaken. This information will be important to inform our work, especially in the Bannaventa area.

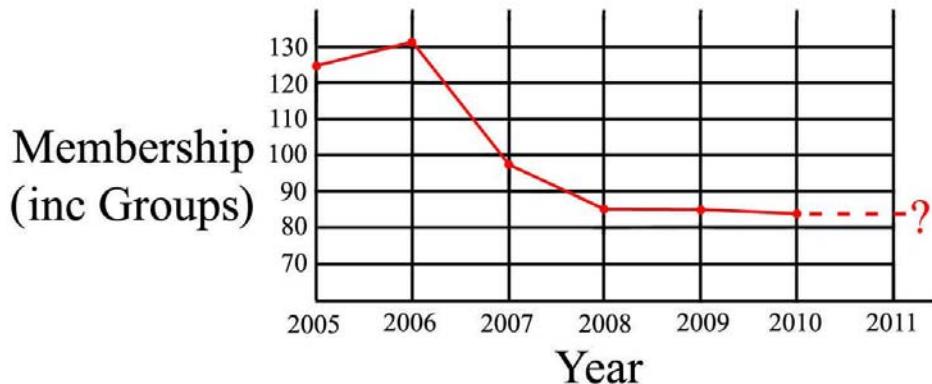
Hopefully 2009/10 will be seen as another year that CLASP has moved forward in stature and experience. A thank you to the members of the Committee for what at times is rather mundane administrative and procedural work – I do so enjoy the parts of the meeting when we actually discuss technical matters.

To finish I will make the same appeal as I did last year, I would very much like to surrender at least part of the secretarial role to enable me to undertake more research. Even somebody to take on the role of Minute Secretary would be appreciated. We have about five meetings a year, normally on a Monday afternoon at Nether Heyford. If you are interested or know someone who is please contact me on the above email address.

D.F. Hayward MBE
Secretary Organising Committee, August 2010

CLASP Membership Report 2010

As at late August 2010, CLASP has a total membership of 83. This includes 13 Groups.



The graph above shows the trend in membership to date.

Julia Johns

Reports from Participating Organisations

Blisworth Heritage Society

The society's meetings in the last twelve months have included talks on The History of the Sun Moon and Stars, Memories of School Days with audience participation, Dig for Victory – a DVD about agriculture in WW2, a joint meeting with the Blisworth Tapestry Project when the completed tapestry was unveiled, a talk about Elizabeth Snitch and the Bedford Map Sampler and a talk on the history of Salcey Forest. In December we had our usual social event with mulled wine and mince pies. Children from the village school, who attended to entertain us with Christmas carols, enjoyed the presentation on Medieval weapons. At the AGM in January the DVD from Milton Malsor showing their village history trail was presented.

During this year we have also enjoyed a talk by our talented village blacksmith and an evening walk in Salcey Forest with a Forestry Commission ranger who showed us aspects of the history, flora and fauna of the forest.

Early last September we held a heritage day entitled "Blisworth Past Present and Future." This event celebrated the varied history of our village and the lively range of organisations flourishing today. Attractions included lace making, canal art, history of the village, canals and railways and displays by the scouts, allotment holders, tapestry group, Village Hall and Playing Fields Association and the community plan team.

During the last twelve months the society has continued to work with and support other organisations including the tapestry group, Blisworth Canal Partnership and CLASP (Community Landscape and Archaeology Survey and Project). The last two interpretation boards (funded by the Local Heritage Initiative) have now been installed. The one at the canal junction shows the development of this part of the canal and the importance of the Northampton Arm in providing a link into the Nene and the river system to the east. The one on Station Road shows the development of the railway and the pleasure gardens and hotel.

The society is continuing to foster research into village history and is planning a programme of projects on buildings and families in the village.

Diana Burgoine (Chair)

Brington History Society

The Society has over 60 members. It has a full programme of monthly meetings with a broad range of subjects presented by guest speakers. Members are encouraged to participate in CLASP events including, field walking under the direction of Archaeology Director Stephen Young, of known Roman sites within the parish of Brington.

Andrew Shaw

Bugbrooke History Group

The Group meets every two months and all meetings are open with no membership charge. A photographic history of Bugbrooke is being compiled and it is hoped that it will be published before Christmas. This is the second volume and covers the period from 1945 to present day. The programme of meetings is varied and often helps to place local history in a national context. Details of future meetings may be found on www.bugbrookelink.co.uk/history

Alan Kent

Daventry Local History Group

We had a very successful exhibition in the new Town Museum in New Street over the May Day weekend. It was a display of photos and artefacts from the Daventry May Days which were organised by the Abbey School between 1953 and 1967. It attracted nearly 400 visitors including about 10 of the May Queens.

Otherwise the year has been a mixture of research evenings and visiting speakers on topics such as the BBC on Borough Hill, English Heritage in the Midlands. Our next meeting is in September when we shall hear a talk on Drove Roads. The exhibition planned for the Autumn will be on Daventry shops.

Our meetings take place at the Town Council Offices, 3 New Street on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm. Visitor and new members are always welcome.

Contact: Angela & David Adams: 01327 704928: email dxadams(at)mac.com

David Adams

Flore Heritage Society

During the past year we have had no archaeological input into CLASP but CLASP's activities are reported at each of our society's meetings. We had six sessions during the past year and one visit. Our talks were extremely varied and included The Vikings in Northamptonshire, the development of the Plessey electronics group at Caswell, the buildings and family of Fawsley and two church related sessions, one on painting in Northamptonshire churches and one on Ashby St Ledgers church. This latter talk was followed by a visit to that church where we saw its wall paintings, special stained glass and engraved brass panels set into the floor.

Our Annual Supper in December was held at the Old Sun at Nether Heyford, and was enjoyed by all.

Interestingly during the year two old photographs and newspaper articles, one dating to 1913, about Flore Football Club came to light. These included tributes to the former Cobblers captain Ben Collins.

Brian Cullen

Friends of Alderton Monuments (F.O.A.M.)

The summer of 2010 saw another three weeks' Dig at The Mount, Alderton under the supervision of Northamptonshire Archaeology and involving a total of forty two volunteers.

The result was even more spectacular than the 2009 Dig, and revealed massive stone walls and foundations. Many, many artefacts were found, mainly 12th 13th and early 14th Century as well as Roman. The pick of the finds were two pieces of Medieval painted glass.

Every indication is that the buildings were of high status but their exact form and use is still a big question. There is a new theory from the Experts every 15 minutes! And this is only a small part of the whole site. Next year, please watch this space.

Derek Batten

Harpole Heritage Group

During August 2009 an excavation was held over 3 days at Harpole Two (Barn Close) with about 20 people taking part from CLASP and Harpole heritage group.

We had another look at the 'wall' which we think might be a cellar. A 6 metre square was taken out and 5 courses of stone were found. We plan to have another look during 2010. Another trench and test pits were dug, with everyone getting very wet. We always seem to choose wet weather!

The metal detectors from NNPAST discovered a further 60 Roman coins and part of a fibula, plus metal and bronze. Many pieces of pottery were also collected.

We continue to have support from the landowners and tenants, without their help we could not discover all the things that we have.

Although we did not apply for a grant for 2009 from Harpole Parish Council, they are giving a grant for 2010/2011, for which we are grateful

Thanks to everyone who has helped out at the 'dig' over the last year.

Harpole Heritage Group celebrated 10 years during 2009 with an exhibition of archive material and members' collections, which was well attended. We have also had a half-log seat erected near to a much-used footpath on Callawell Hill.

In the spring of 2010 we placed a display of Roman artefacts at Harpole Primary School which included Roman coins, a Samian dish, a greyware dish, a lemon squeezer, window glass and several other items. Also included 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 are still the property of the landowner

We continue to have well supported meetings with interesting speakers.

Jennifer Smith
Secretary of Harpole Heritage Group

History of Tiffield Society (H.O.T.S.)

HOTS started in January 2010 with the inaugural meeting attended by around 30 people who expressed interest in a wide variety of topics. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month at The George in Tiffield, with intervening informal sessions on most Tuesdays at the same time.

Speakers so far have been Stephen Young of CLASP on 'Tiffield in the Roman Landscape' and Oliver Low of the 'Village Voices' oral history project, together with contributions from members.

Particular projects that we would like to progress are;

- recording oral history in the form of memories from people with longer associations with the village
- collecting, scanning and transcribing any historical documents that villagers may have
- assisting CLASP on investigation of the Roman villa sites in Tiffield
- assembling historical maps, censuses, deeds and other information to trace the lives and land ownership of former residents

Information that we assemble is intended to be made available on the internet.

We are also keen to develop links with other local history societies or groups and attract further speakers.

If you are interested in joining us please contact Steve Jowers (Hon. Chairman) on 01327 350292 or Jem Russell-Brown (Hon. Secretary) on 01327 351908.

Northamptonshire Artefact Recovery Club [NARC],

The Northamptonshire Artefact Recovery Club was formed by a handful of detectorists who wanted a broad base for their detecting activity without being exclusive to a particular area. We are actively encouraging the responsible use of Metal Detecting as a vehicle for serious research (and education), whilst at the same time encouraging our members to enjoy the hobby as a whole.

We were officially constituted at our inaugural meeting in May 2010. Since then progress has been rapid. We have put together a very professional looking website at www.narc.org.uk and this was launched on the 1st July 2010. We are attracting a lot of web traffic to the site and this in turn is providing a benefit to us from the queries we are receiving.

Our CLASP membership application was unanimously approved at the June meeting of the Organising committee. In the short period of time of being together, we have put together a programme of talks and events for the winter months, including exhibition support to local village fetes. Our efforts have been well received with many positive comments about our Professionalism, Content and Courtesy.

We were able to provide a comprehensive coverage to the CLASP Whitehall excavation project, throughout June and July. We are hoping to provide a similar amount of support to CLASP and the Harpole Heritage Society at their forthcoming excavation, in September.

We are specialising in 'come and try it' sessions, working closely with a local History society to try and identify a mediaeval fayre site. We have been training up their members in order that they can carry out their research in a proper and responsible manner. Two W.I. groups have also asked to experience the thrill of the hobby, the oldest lady to try detecting, was 86 years young.

So all in all, we have had a very busy few months and our numbers are increasing to the point where we will be sustainable for many years to come.

Alan Standish
Chair

Norton, Northampton Portable Antiquities Search Team (NNPAST)

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 C.L.A.S.P., in its reciprocal objective of searching and researching 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 C.L.A.S.P. in metals surveys wherever such help is requested.

That the large number of Roman artifacts found by us enhances C.L.A.S.P.'s research-records, which enlarges 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.

Francis Rodriguez-Veglio

Towcester and District Local History Society

Over the past year TDLHS has initiated several projects and supported local groups in their activities. These initiatives have raised the profile of the society within the Town and have provided opportunities to the members to enhance their knowledge and greater understanding of local history.

Scheduled monthly meetings have been supported by members and all speakers have been well received. The website has been updated and reflects new information. It is now more navigable and visits to the site have increased.
(<http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/tdlhs>)

A remarkable aspect of day-to-day life in Towcester is the effect on it exerted by a medieval cleric named William Sponne. To coincide with the St. Lawrence Flower Festival TDLHS decided to fill a gap in the history of the town and published a book on the life of a priest who accomplished so much.

James Mason Hutchings known as the “Father of the Yosemite”, born in Towcester and later moved to America was noted for his promotion of the Yosemite National Park. Members of the society contributed to the research of the biography and in acknowledgement of this a copy of the book was donated, (retailing at US\$500), which has now been added to our library.

During the winter monthly meetings were held on the subject of practical archaeology. Stephen Young taught us how to classify Roman pottery: these meetings were held in conjunction with CLASP members and our thanks given to Steve for his time, expertise and support.

On an ongoing basis a survey of Lactodurum and its hinterland is being undertaken to identify Roman sites for future field walking initiatives. The desk-top research has been completed and we are now into the process of visiting sites that have been identified.

Members of the society volunteered to assist Friends of Alderton Mount under the supervision of Northamptonshire Archaeology to dig at the mount. A subsequent visit to the Mount, followed by a guided walk based on the Collier and Baker 1727 Alderton map was organised and provided an opportunity to view the buildings still in existence.

HRH the Duke of Gloucester officially opened Bury Mount and Water Meadows on the 12th April. Members of TDLHS contributed to the project, defining the Time Line and producing the literature. Their efforts have been recognised and acknowledged.

Our annual outing led us to the City of Litchfield where we had the opportunity to visit the Cathedral and absorb their local history and learn more of St Chad's Gospel, his Shrine and the nearby Anglo Saxon gold hoard.

A lot was achieved in the year and more activities have been planned to include the celebration of the Towcester Studio Band (1910-2010) – celebrating 100 years of bringing music to the community.

Georgina Boreham

Weedon Bec History Society

It's proposed to put some test pits in land belonging to Weedon Wharf, just south of the churchyard where old County Histories mention remains of buildings. Village folklore has it that it is the site of Werburgh's nunnery. Excavations were carried out some years ago and foundations of a large building were discovered, but it is not known who carried these out and a report hasn't been found.

We have permission from the owners to carry out the work but no date has been fixed yet.

Julia Johns

Whitehall Roman Villa and Landscape Project

The Whitehall Roman Villa project runs all year round, with a small group meeting weekly to process finds and help to care for the site. This year we said a reluctant goodbye to the remains of Bath House One, which had to be re-buried to preserve it. The team marked out its position, and that of the Round House nearby, by sowing a different type of grass seed to the surrounding area, so their locations should show up when the grass grows.

Several of the team have now carried out detailed studies on the Whitehall finds, with topics ranging from brooches to box flue, and a group enjoyed an outing to Cresswell Crags.

The annual dig attracted more volunteers than it was possible to take. In the end fifty-three people worked on the site. Many were old friends but it was good to welcome new faces, several of whom had found us via the internet. There was hot competition to fill the thirteen available student places, especially as some of last year's team were keen to return. The winners were mostly from Nottingham but Newcastle, Liverpool and Edinburgh Universities were also represented.

Last year there was too much rain, and the site flooded. This year there wasn't enough. While Nick's sheep nibbled the turf bare, the team exploring the proto villa scraped away at hard dry ground with no shelter from the sun. Over at Bath House Two, things were more civilised - one of our number devised a sump to catch the spring-water flowing beneath the main Villa site, and we were able to fill watering-cans and soften the ground a little before digging.

One of the delights of a community dig is that people not only learn new skills, but they bring the expertise they've gained elsewhere. While the diggers were on their knees in the mud, the finds, contexts, planning, surveying and metal-detecting teams were helping to work out and record what they were unearthing, and those who couldn't make it were kept up to date by the regular blog on the website - <http://whitehallvilla.co.uk>. We were also pleased to receive several visits from local schools.

As the Archaeological Director's report explains, the proto villa team were rewarded with some good finds including a very fine brooch. There was also much rejoicing – not to mention amazement – when the Bath House team finally turned up a real mosaic floor instead of the hundreds of loose tesserae that have appeared over the years. The other spectacular find – the two re-used roof trusses – came to light conveniently near the sump. These will stay moist and protected until they can be lifted.

The Dig was rounded off with the traditional excellent barbecue, when our nearest and dearest were given the chance to admire what we'd been up to - and a warning that we think there's still more of Bath House Two down there, waiting to be found.

Ruth Downie

