

# CLASP

## Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project

Registered Charity number 1111667



## Eleventh Annual Report

Year ending

31 August 2015



## from the Trustees

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## 1. Report from Chair of Trustees

It is with pleasure that I report on the activities of CLASP after my first year in the role of Chair of Trustees. Overall I consider the year has been relatively successful and various measures that I will discuss in detail later have to my mind strengthened the foundations of the charity. There is however one specific underlying issue that does cause me serious concern and which, if CLASP is to flourish as an active group, specifically in the area of field archaeology, must be resolved.

Firstly however I must thank the previous Chair, Alan Watson, for his work with CLASP both in that role and as a Trustee in general. Thank you Alan, I wish you and Pam well in the future.

Now, to my main concern – as I write this I have just completed a week's fieldwork at Thrupp and it has been very evident, apart from a couple of welcome more youthful volunteers, the age profile of our overall membership is not getting any younger. It is well understood that people in employment have difficulty in getting time from work to attend our fieldwork activities. I take the view that if we can encourage younger people to come with us from an earlier stage in their lives and careers then hopefully they will stay with us for many years. We must also ensure that we promote our activities amongst those nearing retirement and just retired so that they can consider archaeology and heritage as an option before they make final decisions on their principal retirement hobbies and interests.

Another area of concern centres on the ongoing quest searching for an appropriate location for a permanent home for CLASP. Hopefully this would provide apart from acting as a focus for our activities, additionally a permanent, secure and effective archive for the growing amount of physical material CLASP has recovered and been gifted. This search continues. What else causes me concern is the fact that we do not have a full inventory of the material we have. This is of particular importance as a lot of this material is in effect on loan to CLASP from landowners and others. This situation must be addressed by your Trustees as a matter of urgency. It is also perhaps important that the status of physical material held by CLASP is addressed in the Constitution. I will mention these concerns later in this Report when I discuss the Strategy Document.

Having dealt with my concerns it is now time to report on the positive work and outcomes of the past twelve months. Your Trustees have actively ensured that we progressed the implementation of the previously finalised Strategy Document. As you are aware this document was divided into a series of Sub Strategies for ease of management. I will deal with each Sub-Strategy separately. The Strategy Document can be viewed on the CLASP website.

The Research Sub-Strategy has already been implemented. It is important that all new project proposals are submitted and agreed for all future research work. Work on the first Research Proposal, to assist the National Hillforts Mapping Project by mapping the hill-forts of Northamptonshire, is progressing extremely well.

Work on the Corporate Communication Sub-Strategy has also been commenced by our colleague Gren Hatton, with his work on designing and implementing a 'House Style', and on the production of 'Case Studies' and other promotional material. He is currently working on a new display stand that CLASP can situate for periods in various venues where it will achieve maximum appropriate public exposure. Gren has kindly donated these stands to CLASP, thank you. Development is also currently ongoing to produce new items of clothing bearing the CLASP logo. It is important that we have a strong corporate identity that is well recognised outside of CLASP. To that effect I attended a recent conference in London organised by the CBA to establish a Local Heritage Engagement Network to assist community archaeological groups engage with their local authorities. This is designed to endeavour to avoid some of the extreme effects of current government cuts affecting local archaeology and services like the HER and PAS. I am pleased to say that CLASP's current contacts with the local authority are in fact putting us forward as good example of the way to deal with these issues.

As you will have heard from our Treasurer, our financial accounts are stronger this year than previously. We are slowly building a reserve fund for maintenance and eventual replacement of our geophysical



equipment, principally by way of donations from assistance we have provided to other bodies. I am also pleased to report that active work is ongoing to establish a procedure to make Gift Aid available on donations made to CLASP, once implemented this will help make an enhancement to CLASP income and reserves.

The ongoing problem with establishing a permanent base, including an archive store, has still not been resolved. We have explored various possible scenarios and as usual financing, either on a capital or current expenditure basis, has been the principal problem with us achieving this Sub-Strategy to date. Your Trustees will have to consider further options before the end of this year, including the possibility that we may have to consider a relationship with the proposed county archive at Chester Farm. To that effect informal talks have been held with a representative of the County Council. A full report on these talks will be provided in due course.

With regard to the Human Resources Sub-Strategy, I previously mentioned in this report problems with improving our demographic profile by lowering the average age of our membership. Even by lowering the average by between five to ten years we would significantly improve the future of CLASP. Your trustees are working on this problem and several initiatives are currently being developed including possible public events with the objective of recruiting. Work still requires to be done on establishing and reviewing other human resource policies.

To satisfy the Technical Procedures Sub-Strategy we still have work to be done on establishing a full library of technical procedures and instructions. I have mentioned the question of establishing a full inventory of material held as a matter of priority. There may also be a need to effect slight change to the wording of our Constitution to cover the disposal of artefacts if the situation ever arose that CLASP was faced with 'winding up'.

I will now turn to the question of our short, medium and long term strategies. It is interesting when I look at these objectives that our implementation has been mixed across the three categories. Some have been implemented, others not. The implementation has been out of sequence. I intend to ask your Trustees to review the implementation of these strategies during the next year.

I have been very pleased to see the proactive way that the new officers of the Organising Committee, Rob Close and Jim Aveling have assumed their roles of Chair and Secretary respectively. They have made their mark in a very positive manner that I welcome. The Membership Secretary, Julia Johns is also thanked for her ongoing work as Membership Secretary.

I must also give my thanks to my fellow Trustees for their involvement, Gren Hatton for his work with Corporate Identity and Hill-forts, Tony Kesten as Individual Members representative and our representative with Milton Keynes Heritage Association; a task he performs with due diligence ensuring that our activities are reported to them, thereby enhancing our image 'south of the border'. Lastly but not least I must thank the officers for their ongoing work and commitment, Sandra Deacon, Secretary, Angela Evans, Treasurer and last but not least your committed Archaeological Director, Stephen Young the person who originally thought of the concept of CLASP and stuck with it ever since.

As always I urge all members to become involved in every aspect of CLASP's activities including fieldwork, research, conservation, archiving. Hopefully all members regularly access our website, join Claspweb and make occasional contributions to our Newsletter. Mention of the Newsletter reminds me to thank our editors both of the Annual Report and Newsletter; Ruth Downie and Tony Johns respectively.

Hopefully the status of CLASP in the wider archaeological world, community, professional and academic will be raised even more in the forthcoming year.

Thank you!

D. F. Hayward MBE

Chair of Trustees



## 2. Archaeological Director's Report

CLASP continues to be active in the field, in particular with regard to our long term and continuing initiative to characterise the Roman landscape in our local area. The thrust of our archaeological strategy also remains the same with an emphasis on providing opportunities and experience to develop practical and interpretative skills necessary to record and understand the local archaeological resource. Albeit that a greater emphasis will be by necessity placed in the future on enhancing CLASP volunteers ability to utilize computing and technical capabilities to ensure professional standards of recording.

Beside the landscape characterisation of Roman settlement in our locality CLASP continues to contribute to other research initiatives such as the Hillfort Project and the Early Governance of England Project

However this year our planned initiatives were severely affected by the cancelling of fieldwork in Harpole and Paulerspury. Without doubt the organizing of disparate fieldwork initiatives is becoming increasingly subject to a greater range of legislative and agricultural vagaries than ever before. Unfortunately we may increasingly have to be aware that changes in farming practice will have an impact on the overall time scale for fieldwork as agricultural regimes become less amenable to archaeological requirement and we become even more reliant on farmers who are managing under pressure complex business environments.

Nevertheless we were able to undertake an exploratory excavation on the site of Roman settlement and Deserted Medieval Village of Thrupp. The site is of particular relevance because of its proximity to Bannaventa and for the potential connection between the settlements in relation to continuity and mobility of occupation during the Dark Age and Early Medieval period. Interestingly, the predominance of Roman features and the existence of metal working hearths at Thrupp recorded during the excavation may well have implications for how we interpret site relationships locally and industrial activity in the Bannaventa hinterland. Further work is planned for Thrupp which may allow for a more focused research project in the future like that at Whitehall Farm which CLASP could then concentrate upon.

Besides undertaking a range of fieldwork this year that included the usual geophysical survey, trial trenching and excavation there has been a greater focus on preparing and producing academic and popular articles and accounts for wider dissemination of the archaeological work initiated by CLASP. In particular report profiles have been developed to insure a consistent 'house style' and professional standard of publication. These report formats will now be utilised as we move forward to publish the results of other work completed in the past few years. This also means that CLASP can initiate further training in formatting and authorship of reports for those who wish to develop their Post Excavation skills and experience and help in the production of written reports. In addition a series of pamphlets designed for general public consumption and to advertise the charity's work to potential volunteers as well as inform our own members have either been published or are in production.

CLASP's academic reports for this year were concerned with geophysical survey and Rescue excavation. The geophysical report investigated medieval closes at Upper Boddington, Northamptonshire. The work was commissioned by the local parish council and assisted them in meeting planning requirements for the development of a village park. A second report was concerned with a '*watching brief*' undertaken on a cable trench on the B4036, Thrupp Farm, Norton, Northamptonshire which revealed a substantial *in situ* series of medieval buildings which undoubtedly must be associated with Deserted Medieval Village known to exist here. Both reports are indicative of the type of fieldwork that CLASP could engage with beyond the current existing research initiatives in the future, dependant on resources, given the role and remit of the charity.

Those 'case study' pamphlets which have been printed present the outcome of several of the CLASP research initiatives. These documents are designed to highlight our archaeological findings in an informative and accessible way, helping not only to inform CLASP volunteers of the meaning of fieldwork undertaken but to widen the knowledge about our activities among the general public who may wish then to become involved. Foremost of these is the story and interpretation of the Whitehall Farm Roman Villa Research Excavation which describes the development and character of a Romano-British villa estate. The second deals with the landscape characterisation of the Local People: Local Past Project which investigated the nature and context of settlement in central Northamptonshire during the Roman period. It encapsulates the



findings of the academic report in a more concise and accessible way. A third pamphlet – not as yet printed – outlines the extensive fieldwork undertaken at the Posting Station of Bannaventa which explains the meaning of the geophysical, field walking and metal detecting surveys.

Several other 'case study' pamphlets are being planned or in production and these will be added to the range of material available in the future as we work towards a promotional folder outlining CLASP fieldwork. It is hoped these will be used in conjunction with a new series of display boards highlighting our work that can be made available for display to other agencies and groups to help recruit new volunteers.

Meanwhile CLASP volunteers have also continued to undertake Post-excavation work on preparing and analysing the assemblages and field record on the Whitehall Farm Roman Villa Research Excavation. These archaeological activities are designed to provide opportunities for members to continue to widen their skills base through practical application and understanding of the archaeological process. The post-excavation activities revolve around the digitisation of plans and sections for utilisation and interpretation in the GIS programme MapInfo, an essential tool in the visualisation of the archaeological record. CLASP volunteers also continue to develop their practical skills with the geophysical equipment and it is our intention to build on this capability within CLASP for members to gain the ability and confidence to write the interpretative reports necessary to disseminate the original field work.

Stephen Young

Archaeological Director

### 3. Report from Chair of Organising Committee

I took over from Dave Hayward as Chairman of the Committee just after the 2014 AGM. I am pleased to report that Jim Aveling (Blisworth Heritage Society) volunteered to become Secretary.

We started the year with a review of the role of the Committee. The members of the Committee confirmed that there were three key roles:

- Plan, arrange and monitor the practical archaeological activities of CLASP.
- Take responsibility for specific activities and projects as delegated to it by the Executive Committee, particularly those contained within the CLASP Strategy Document and its relevant supporting sub-strategies.
- Ensure effective communication between CLASP's official bodies and its member organisations and individual and associate members in support of CLASP's Constitutional Objective "TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE SUBJECT OF ARCHAEOLOGY, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY, IN WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE."

Three main archaeological projects were planned for Summer 2015. Unfortunately, the excavation at Harpole had to be cancelled but hopefully by the time of the October AGM many members would have participated in and enjoyed the excavations at Norton and Paulerspury.

Five members of the Committee have been supporting Gren Hatton (Barby) in surveying Hill Forts in Northamptonshire as input into a National Project led by Professor Gary Lock at Oxford University. Attendees at the AGM will have the opportunity to hear about this project from both Professor Lock and Gren.

Guidelines have been produced for the retention of artefacts. Whilst it is likely that certain artefacts will always be retained (e.g. small finds, coin and pottery) the decision whether to retain other items will depend on the Objective for the research.



The Committee has considered how CLASP might increase its membership. One proposal is to organise special events at which tutorials or demonstrations might be provided. The Trustees are now considering how to take this forward.

Committee Members are always open to suggestions from both Independent Members and Affiliate members and Societies in relation to activities you might wish to participate in or with respect to communication (e.g. what you would like to hear about, how we communicate to you and you to us).

Rob Close

Chair of Organising Committee

#### **4. Report of Secretary to Organising Committee**

The CLASP Organising Committee comprises some of the CLASP Trustees together with members representing the societies which are affiliated to CLASP. The Committee meets at Nether Heyford on a bi-monthly basis.

At the meetings the role of the Committee is discussed and refined, and the future archaeological programme is produced. The Secretary's role is to produce the minutes of the meetings and to send them to fellow committee members and to the Web Master who places them on CLASPWEB so that all CLASP members can see them and be informed.

Jim Aveling (Blisworth Heritage Society)

Secretary of Organising Committee

#### **5. Membership Report**

CLASP currently has 42 Individual Members and 14 Groups.

Julia Johns

Membership secretary



## 6. Treasurer's Report

The following details were submitted by the Treasurer, Angela Evans, and reviewed by Rob Close:

### **Independent review of the Report and Accounts for CLASP – year ended 31/3/2015**

The trustees of CLASP consider that an audit is not required for the year ending 31/3/2015 and that an independent review is sufficient.

Although I am Chairman of CLASP's Organisation Committee, I am not directly involved in the financial decisions of the Trustees nor involved in any management of the Accounts by the Treasurer. Hence it was deemed that I able to conduct an independent review.

I am not a member of a recognised accounting body but I do have considerable experience in financial management.

I have reviewed all receipts relating to donations and to expenditures and reconciled them all to the bank account, implied cash book and creditors account. I have raised some questions and made some suggestions, all of which have been responded to. In my view the Accounts accurately represent the receipts provided to me.

**Robert Close OBE**  
BA, MSc, ACIB

26<sup>th</sup> July 2015

**CLASP Treasurer's Report AGM 2015**

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

**Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project****Receipts & Expenditure Account for Year Ending 31 March 2015**

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
B/f from 31.03.14	Bank	12,937.48	
	Pd not on Statement	-50.15	
	Cash in Hand	22.34	
		<u>12,909.67</u>	
			Insurance
			529.27
Harpole Parish Council		0.00	Harpole spend
			227.98
History Societies		100.00	Finds Processing/Bannavent
			32.93
Other Donations		45.00	Website & Leaflets
			258.04
Membership fees		430.00	Committee Room Hire
			30.00
Bank Interest		20.61	Affiliation Fees
			84.00
Profit from AGM		73.00	AGM Costs
			60.00
Marketing Funds/Leaflets		300.00	Other
			38.98
Daventry Museums		1,000.00	GPS
			292.51
			Geophys costs
			298.97
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b><u>1,968.61</u></b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>
			<b><u>1,852.68</u></b>
			Bank Statement
			13,055.12
			Cash in Hand
			3.41
			Paid not yet on Statement
			-32.93
		<b><u>14,878.28</u></b>	<b><u>14,878.28</u></b>

At the year end then, the Harpole balance	£1,406.17
Roman Research Trust	£2,500.00
Lottery Heritage Fund	£3,845.96
Money raised by ourselves	£1,070.25
GPS	£707.49
Marketing Funds	£70.00
Money raised by Magntometer	£3,425.73
Thus usable funds	<u>£13025.60</u>





Community Landscape Archaeology Project Accounts up to 2014/2015 Charity No. 1111667

21/04/2015

<u>Income</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>C'side Agency</u>	<u>Harpole P.C.</u>	<u>Other Donations</u>	<u>Ordinary</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>Balance</u>
						To			
31.03.15 Harpole Heritage	10,400.00					31.03.15	Harpole Heritage	8,993.83	1,406.17
31.03.15 Heritage Lottery Fund	23,981.00					31.03.15	Lottery Heritage Fund	20,135.04	3,845.96
31.03.15 Roman Research Trust	6,000.00					31.03.15	Roman Research Trust	3,500.00	2,500.00
31.03.15 Ordinary	26,644.64				1,956.64	31.03.15	Ordinary	21,371.17	5,273.47
	67,025.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,956.64			54,000.04	13,025.60
Adjustments to									67,025.64
									21/04/2015







