



CLASP

Community Landscape & Archæology Survey Project NEWSLETTER



Website: www.claspweb.org.uk

Charity No 1111668

Winter 2024

Note from the Chairman

AGM

Thank you to those that made it to the AGM in Harpole on 30th October. We had a very low 16 attendees. A number of regular attendees had given their apologies, but it would be great to see more next year. The cake alone makes the event worth attending plus the archaeological presentation that follows.

Membership

A reminder to all that the Annual membership. Fee is due from 1st April, but many choose to pay at the AGM. If you have not paid, please do so.

The past year

This has been a very quiet year re fieldwork, with the fields not becoming available to do the planned excavation. Further, there have been ongoing issues with the

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magnetometer. Thankfully, Don Atwell identified connection issues and resolved these. We hope to recommence our magnetometry surveys soon.

Steve Young has also come up with a number of volunteering opportunities including the processing of artefacts, helping with photographic records and using GPS devices for fieldwalking.

Field Centre

We are about to sign a lease to stay at the Field Centre for a further year and hopefully in 2025 some of our artefacts will be moved to the Northants Archaeology Resource Centre for the long-term safe keeping.

Trustees

Trustees met four times in 2024 and have been active in the overall governance of CLASP, organising displays and approaching volunteer agencies to bring in more members. All 8 existing Trustees were re-elected at the AGM. Don Atwell, CLASP's I.T. lead was also elected as a Trustee.

2023-24 Accounts

The Chairman summarised the 2023-24 Accounts. The key points were:

- There was a small net cost in relation to the non-Field Centre related items.
 - Membership Donations of £540 just about covered Insurance costs of £584.

- Charges for the dig covered the cost of the digger, but not the costs of all the items that had to be purchased (e.g. boxes and bags). We might need to charge more for digs or seek sponsorship.
- Donations and the sale of an unused GPS device helped cover the other costs of running CLASP such as the website and marketing. The costs of the Field Centre were just over £1600, with the main costs being £2000 rent and £300 for necessary electrical work. This was partly financed by the further drawdown of £750 from a grant from One Family and a contribution from the 100 Club.
- **CLASP needs to bring in more funds to cover the ongoing costs of the Field Centre as there is a limit to the Unrestricted Funds that can be used. Members are encouraged to participate in the 100 Club.**

Presentation by Don Atwell

Our Archaeology Director was unable to attend to give his normal presentation. As a result, Don Atwell provided an interesting overview of technical projects he has been working on. Firstly, four telescopic poles have been created that allow those doing fieldwork to record with good accuracy using GPS the location and type of finds. Secondly, software is now being used to turn photos into 3 dimensional representations for use in displays etc. Thirdly, Don is actively bringing together datasets of geophysics results, plans, locational records etc. Don is happy to train members to help with this.

The View from the Archaeological Director for Winter 2024

Unfortunately, we were unable to continue the excavation at Manshead this year and we shall have to wait and see if it can be reorganised for next year. This means that there isn't much fieldwork or research producing new insights upon which I can report for this winter newsletter, but some interesting information and analyses has emerged which is worth sharing in this article. My comments are based on the work undertaken by Chris Chinnock, our human bone specialist who has been investigating the Whitehall Farm skeletons, and Pieta Graves who has undertaken a reassessment and conservation of the metal assemblages from the site. The core commentary set down here is based on his recently produced preliminary report and her personal comments on the Post Roman and Early migration period cemetery assemblages. CLASP is very fortunate to have their astute observations of the bone and artifact collections from the site.

Importantly, the occupants observed from the twenty-nine graves excavated at Nether Heyford represent one of only two assemblages from this important period to have undergone detailed osteological analysis, the other being the poorly preserved cemetery at Wakerley (Adams and Jackson 1989a). This is an amazing fact when we consider the longevity of archaeological fieldwork in the county. Chris believes that the combined osteological and isotope analysis undertaken by him and Dr Samantha Leggett afford useful insight into the lives of the people living in our study area in the fifth to seventh centuries AD. He places the assemblage in the context of more recent discoveries in the county, at Overstone, Northampton (Markus 2022), and the high-status burial at Harpole (MOLA 2022), pointing out the Whitehall cemetery finds will add significantly to our

understanding of burial practice during this critical time in the evolution of England.

The excavated individuals represent a small rural community whose lifestyle appears to have been a arduous one from a young age. Investigation of the vertebrae in the spines especially amongst the male population, points to them having undertaken strenuous activities early in life. Other conditions that might be indicative of injuries during adolescent growth spurts further hint at active lifestyles in the non-adult population. Chris suggests this may have implications as to when individuals were considered adults or at least, at what age they may have been expected to undertake adult tasks – a coming of age then as now dependant on your social and economic position. However, we must not take from this that life typically was brutal and nasty but more likely it could be harsh and demanding.

He believes there may well be ‘a relatively high prevalence of infectious disease as well and higher than expected rates of dental decay, indicating a population more open to suffering periods of disease and/or dietary/environmental stress. This may reflect the known climatic provincial landscape to Brittany in the mid-6th century AD. The archaeological dilemma for us is whether the burials can be linked to the evacuation of the timber phase of buildings erected on the ruins of the Roman villa at that time. The chronology fits and the Post Roman ceramic assemblage from the sub-Roman habitation of the estate matches, but the evidence remains circumstantial.

Limited evidence for inter-personal violence was observed in the assemblage and this might be considered curious given the presence of shields, spears and a sword within the material culture of associated grave goods. Further information from the ongoing isotope study, undertaken by Dr Sam Leggett might throw greater light on the diet and deterioration in the Post Roman period in this country, highlighting indirectly the possible cause for the documented migration of significant elements of the Post Roman

British population from the post mobility of the people and there may be scope for other forms of biomolecular testing, including DNA, to come. I'm especially interested in any link or differences between the twenty-four east/west burials and the four south/north burials, given the slightly later date range of the carbon dates for the smaller group of individuals. We should also remember one of the females was of continental origin so the idea of *'foederati'* being brought in to defend the site is still a possibility.

A total of six radiocarbon measurements were successfully dated and these were used as part of a dating model that refined the statistical scatter of the radiocarbon dates to give a more appropriate representation of the historical duration of the cemetery, allowing for more structured estimates for when burial began and ended at the site. The model estimates that burial began at the Whitehall Farm cemetery between 267–535 cal AD (95% probability) probably between 385–499 cal AD (68% probability); and ended between 653–905 cal BC (95% probability) probably between 663–762 cal BC (68% probability). An estimated duration of burial activity is thought to be between 129–325 years (95% probability; Duration of cemetery), probably 163–263 years (68% probability). The period between one and two hundred years implies, at the least, several generations of interment - perhaps indicative of a smaller population at any one given times across the utilization of the site than I may have thought the case.

These are interesting date ranges as they imply a broader range for deposition than I might ascribe. At the higher probability levels, the date ranges seem to be over expanded but my assessment would be that a hundred-year deposition of burials would probably reflect the generational perspective of the site given the amount of the graves and the total number of individuals retrieved from the cemetery, not including the non-related intrusive and soil horizon bone fragments. The possibility for an extremely late Roman date for the commencement of burials at the site would be particularly intriguing and requires further

thought. I feel these findings in general demonstrates how the work we undertake can and does have the ability to impact on the archaeological study of a period far beyond that we might perceive as a group when doing the initial fieldwork.

The conservation of the range of iron artefacts from the Post Roman & Migration cemetery by Pieta Graves of Drakon Heritage is now nearly complete and has also resulted in an interesting additional discovery. Inside one of the shield bosses of one of the four south/north male burials in association with the internal handle, a remnant of fabric material, probably linen, was observed. This is the second example of residual fibres surviving from the burial assemblages at the site. One instance of this is unusual but two samples from the same site make this extremely rare. Only three or four examples of linen fabric are known in the East Midlands for the entire Post Roman and Early Migration period.

Further analysis of the threads should confirm the type of fabric involved but our best guess now is the material is thought to be linen. The other example of surviving fabric you might recall was attached to one of the brooches found in a female grave. Interestingly, as both discoveries appear to signify linen cloth, it allows us to speculate as to the usage of the material. It is assumed that wool was the most used material during the 5th and 6th centuries and that linen wouldn't have been a widely available fabric particularly as flax was probably not grown as a crop in Britain at this time. Should both examples be derived from the flax plant (*Linum usitatissimum*) and given its near absence from the British archaeological record, it implies specialist consumption as an imported material being used in the cemetery - most likely as a shroud cloth wrapping and covering the individual bodies. The tightly laid position of some of the inhumations suggests the use of such a covering and therefore this practice, although no shroud pins have been located. However, I'm unsure whether shroud pins

were used at this period and don't know of any surviving examples so I'm not sure whether this invalidates my line of thinking.

We are also looking at a variety of new projects both fieldwork and post excavation based, and I will be saying more about these below and as they are developed over the next few months. Twin developments in the proficiency of computers and the accessibility of appropriate free software have revolutionised our ability to incorporate these areas of expertise into the archiving and interpretation of our archaeological findings. These developments open whole new horizons of engagement for volunteers to acquire the skills to work with and manipulate archaeological data to a level which can only enhance our understanding of the data. It is now within the scope of any interested CLASP volunteers to acquire the necessary experience to work successfully on home-based computers or laptop on project-based initiatives should they so desire.

One area of work which is currently being progressed is the rectification of our oblique photographic collections of excavations into orthographic vertical images for planning and interpretative purposes - something that I was uncertain I would see becoming possible during my lifetime....and yet it is within our reach today. It is now possible to alter and rectify aerial photographs sufficiently well to be able to present them in context with the cartographically digitised plans onto Google earth images as a visual digital database. Don Attwell and I are working on a case study to integrate the images, plans and other important elements (e.g. Ordnance Survey & field grid, contours, context & feature locations and artifact distributions) to a computer-generated record of the Whitehall Farm Roman Villa excavation which will be of immense help in curating the archive as well as the interpretation and publication of the site.

Don and I have now reached a point in our endeavours where there are opportunities for CLASP members to become involved, learn new techniques and procedures whilst assisting

us in our objective to rectify our archive of images. The application of archaeological data records to digitised computer interfaces is becoming more common amongst workers in the field and the chance to disseminate these skills among a wider group of our volunteers would be extremely beneficial. We just need to sort out any logistical and procedural challenges before rolling out this methodological approach to any willing volunteers.



Photo 1: Rectified aerial photograph & Planning image

Anyone interested should contact Sandra Deacon (Sandydeacon@hotmail.com) or me initially (syarchaeology@outlook.com), so that we can see whether it is the occasional member who is interested or potentially a wider group of volunteers. This would assist us in developing an approach to training and organising small workloads. Help and advice in accessing, installing the free software and suitability of your computers for the work will also be available. Some of the Tuesday group working at the Field Centre will already have been approached about the various opportunities available but we are keen to involve as many people as possible in these initiatives.

We also now possess a new generation of GPS systems built by Don for use by CLASP in the field and I have often mentioned them in talks, lectures and the newsletter. The time has now come to bring these instruments into wider use in CLASP fieldwork and to offer a training opportunity for volunteer members to acquire practical experience before deploying them on a project in the early Autumn/Winter. Until recently we have been reliant on our Automatic levels and Theodolites and the exceptional knowledge and skills of Colin Evans, CLASP surveyor. Unfortunately, we cannot continue to expect and rely on his experience and expertise, however useful that would be, especially as we look forward into the medium- and long-term future of the charity given the restraints of age and health. Our traditional surveying aids demand a degree of knowledge and practice which is more difficult to instil easily in a wider core grouping of volunteers and therefore we are obliged to look at different approaches for overcoming this potentially problematic area as a response to dealing with the surveying requirement of our work.

The new instruments will help us by providing a simple easily operated option for recording locations which is relatively idiot proof (I know I've used it!) which doesn't need extensive training, field application or mathematical insight to achieve dependability. These GPS instruments will not answer all our potential surveying requirements, but they broaden our general ability in a relatively painlessly way to place our work into its geographical context relatively securely.

Each machine can record the position and height of archaeological finds and cardinal positions of grids for fieldwalking, geophysical surveys as well as trial trench corners. It can also be used in the excavation environment, although we are still currently exploring the level of dependency for absolute accuracy in relation to confined area of detailed archaeological stratigraphy. The machines have also been adapted and have the capacity to assist in the analysis of fieldwalking assemblages as

the material is collected. Not only are they able to designate the find type but also allow the operator to identify individual pottery fabrics related to Roman ceramic collections whilst undertaking the work in the field. This can shorten the post fieldwork analytical process considerably which is a great positive although, more demanding, does depend on the ability of the operator to identify the fabrics they are recording. These GPS instruments also record automatically the time of day, the date, the number of satellites and ascribe each record with its own number in a numerical sequence.

Now the initial controlled field trials have been completed it would be advantageous to hold an initial training session for CLASP volunteers to learn how to use the instrument in preparation for an Autumn /Winter fieldwalking session. I believe it would be valuable for all our volunteers to understand how to use the instrument, although I'm not expecting everybody to use all the analytical options as this would require extra training in certain areas. However, it would certainly enhance competence and proficiency amongst volunteers regarding basic surveying requirements and develop individual confidence in the process of independently logging spatial locations. The training is straightforward and will cover an individual's ability to calibrate, setup the instrument, record the type of find, the location and height of a given location and download data.

Anyone interested in attending a training day should initially contact Sandra Deacon to indicate their interest and willingness to take part, so we can organise a date quickly. I would expect the event to last about three hours, and it will probably be held at Whitehall Farm. We should be able to accommodate between eight and twelve people should there be a demand for places.

In addition, we are planning training opportunities to develop your ability to identify Roman Pottery fabric and forms. Initially this will involve practical experience on sorting generic

Roman fabrics in preparation for an investigation and analyses of a large fieldwalked assemblage. Sessions will reinforce any prior experience and introduce the basic concepts and methods for identifying the generic fabrics to those who are new to the subject. The training and practical application will be held at the CLASP Field Centre forming part of the ongoing archiving of material recovered from recent fieldwork. The timing and days on which the training will be undertaken at the Field Centre will depend on the number of people wanting to take part and their availability. It could be either on a Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon with a first initiative underway in October with a second course to be arranged later.

Again, anyone wishing to take part should initially contact Sandra Deacon. I see these sessions as part of an ongoing series of events that will enable volunteers to become conversant with identifying Roman fabrics, forms and chronology. Enabling individuals to make full use of the extra facilities on the new GPS instruments and to increase the pool of knowledgeable people available to assist in preliminary analysis of Roman pottery assemblages.

We will also be offering a training opportunity to volunteers who wish to learn or refresh their knowledge on how to operate and use the CLASP geophysical equipment. The calibration and setting up of the instruments and the setting out of the survey grids will be demonstrated on site. This will be done through a relatively small-scale survey project at Whitehall Farm recording some of the unsurveyed Roman landscape features adjacent to the villa complex and inner field system. Rob Close is leading this area of our activities, and we want to re-establish a team of people who could assist him in geophysical survey projects that the charity becomes involved with in the future. The work at the Roman Posting station at Bannaventa (Whilton Lodge) demonstrated how useful this type of work can be and how essential access to this methodology is in the armoury of a

community-based group in the archaeological investigation of any site. Should you wish to be or have been involved in geophysical survey and want to attend the training and practical session contact Sandra Deacon to indicate your interest and willingness to take part.

A further development I think worthy of noting is the rise in the number of new volunteers coming to us through our outreach provision centred on the volunteers' centres covering Northampton, Towcester, Daventry, Rugby and Milton Keynes. This is administered by Rosemary Daniels, a CLASP trustee. Interestingly, although attracting the usual mixed demographic, it has produced a small but growing cadre of younger volunteers who have either just finished college or university or are having a year out before going. Amongst these individuals we also have been fortunate to obtain the assistance of Marcus Spencer Brown who is completing his PhD on propaganda messages on late Roman coinage. Apart from his general interest in our activities he is helping to identify the coins from the posting station/small town of Bannaventa and the Whitehall Farm Roman villa site that we have not yet been able to show our Roman coin specialist Dr Mark Curteis.



Photo 2: The Licinius Coin

One of the Roman coins he has identified is of special interest as it has the bust of Licinius I on both the Obverse and Reverse sides of the coin. The coin was struck probably in a Constantinian mint somewhere in the western empire between 307 – 321 AD when the empire was divided between these two emperors. Technically it is known as an 'incuse reverse' or 'mule reverse' and indicates when the flan was initially struck there was another coin underneath whose obverse image indented into the top coin reverse (This can quite clearly be seen in the photograph above). Signifying a careless moment in the mint that wasn't picked up by quality control. Coins of Licinius I are rare on our sites but always of interest should you remember the gold aureus found by Rev Francis Rodriques Veglio which is one of only three found in the entire western empire.

You can see that we are trying very hard to organise and deliver a wide range of activities and learning opportunities for our volunteers and we would very much like to see your continued participation. I should also state there are opportunities for further fieldwork, and we will pursue these over the coming year and I'm sure you will be excited by them.

Hi, my name's Steve Bacon, I'm a trustee of C.L.A.S.P. and I'd like to let you know about a project I've taken on recently, one which you might like to get involved in too.

Having only taken up archaeology upon retirement, although being of the 'Time Team' generation and a reenactor been interested on the periphery for very many years, I am keen to gain as much experience and knowledge as I can as quickly as I can.

I've taken part in the annual digs whenever possible and done pot washing but my complete lack of formal archaeological training has limited my involvement in post-archaeological analysis, recording and archiving.

I have to admit that I have been unable to volunteer on Tuesdays at the Field Centre, partly due to distance but mainly because of other commitments, in my case school sessions at a local heritage site or, failing that, digging with another group who always dig on Tuesdays, so when Stephen Young suggested a new pilot project to help identify and catalogue some of the finds I jumped at the chance.

The aim of this project is for C.L.A.S.P. to be in a position to be able to transfer much of the archive to A.R.C. as quickly as possible and so alleviate the storage challenges we currently experience.

As this work will involve identification and cataloguing of objects, almost like a real archaeologist, this is a daunting challenge, what if I make a mistake or haven't the faintest idea what I'm looking at?

The answer, of course, is that expert support and training are available, it's in nobody's interest for this work not to be carried out to the highest academic standards possible.

I had an initial meeting with Steve and Jackie to determine what might be of interest but also useful for C.L.A.S.P., and have settled on Roman C.B.M. For many this might sound deadly dull, but there is a lot of it and it seems it's a bit of a Cinderella topic in general archaeology. For me it's also not too technical or wide-ranging for a starter project.

Jackie has been kind enough to agree to be my mentor and first port of call and I can foresee lots of emails flying, sorry Jackie. I will also arrange to attend the Field Centre at mutually convenient times to get face-to-face training and guidance as my confidence slowly builds. (At least I hope it will!).

We are in the early days of this project and I hope that many more of you will feel keen to help out and maybe extend your own knowledge and become more expert in a field of your choice, post-dig analysis, after all, is so fundamentally important to any active archaeological group.

Steve Bacon provided this extract from:

Wetton's Guide-book to Northampton and its Vicinity

Wetton, G.N. 1849, pp173/174

(all spellings and punctuation as in original text)

Travelling northward, towards Weedon Beck, we arrive at Castle Dykes, an extensive entrenchment on the west side of Farthingstone wood. It appears to have consisted of two different works. We cannot do better than give Baker's {1} description of it. We commence with the first, which appears to have commanded the road we have passed from Farthingstone and another which passes from Preston Capes to Stowe; and further along the latter road is another entrenchment on Stowe heath, which has been thrown up for the same purpose. "In a field recently reclaimed from wood to tillage, about a furlong south-west of the Castle Dykes, and described by Morton {2} as a plot of ground call'd Castle-yard, is a square intrenchment with only the inner vallum remaining; but on the north side, which is within the wood, both the vallum and the foss are still visible."

The vallum at the west end is now levelled, as it was "ascertained to be about nine feet in width, and constructed of two outer walls of stone, about three feet each in thickness; the intervening space of three feet was filled with soil, except at one point, where earth and small cobble stones, which had evidently undergone the action of fire, were used for about three yards in length.

At each end was a solid mass of several hundreds' weight of scoriae of iron, intermixed with considerable quantities of charcoal, and inside the wall, near to the scoriae, was found a long iron spoon, and the socket of a spear. Similar masses of scoriae, dug up in the vicinity of camps in various parts of the kingdom, have been considered indicative of Roman occupation, and corroborated as it is in the present instance by the regular form of the earth-works, there can be little hesitation in referring this spot to a summer encampment of that warlike people." A Mr J. Simco at p.1179, vol. 63, "Gentleman's Magazine," states that T. Grant, Esq., of Towcester, has been levelling the Castle Dykes, and gave me a Roman pot:" this was in 1793

{1} History and Antiquities of the County of Northampton. George Baker 1822

{2} The Natural History of Northamptonshire. John Morton 1712

Meet our surveying Supremo Colin Evans

When I joined the Ordnance Survey from school I started 2 years of training to be a cartographic draughtsman / surveyor. In the 1930's the OS was wholly military and had started the resurvey of Britain. This was interrupted by WW2 and not restarted until a couple of years after the wars end. The OS had been re-formed into what was known as a holding battalion. This meant that the higher management were serving officers and the workers were trained civil servants who could be directly enlisted in the event of another war. The OS had other responsibilities including an archaeological department which later became part of British/English Heritage.

As well as night school I was trained by the OS to be a 'complete' surveyor/draughtsman. This included time spent with the Archaeological department. Before the re-survey of an area, urban and rural, any archaeological information was listed so that a surveyor would know what to look for. For a while I spent one day a week at the British Museum reading reports of excavations etc. and transcribing details onto cards for the surveyor to use.

The OS being a holding battalion, when I was called up for National Service and after basic training I was posted to The Royal Engineers Survey. After some months at the School of Military Survey and much more intense training, both day

and night, I was put on a troop ship bound for Korea. Luckily by the time I reach Egypt a truce had been declared.

More training, including how to survive in a desert, before with about a dozen or so others I was sent to Jordan to spent about a year wandering about in those wide open spaces. At that time an army unit had a standard issue of vehicles including a motor bike. I was given the bike!! Going by boat to Aqaba and then by road to Amman it meant that we could visit Petra. I rode my bike down the canyon that leads to Petra. There were only 3 of us and a few Bedouin who lived there. We had it to ourselves. I now wish that I had known more to understand what I was seeing.

As Jordan was a friendly country I now had to become a civilian. I had a passport issued in Cairo and wore civilian clothes. We had been issued with 'civvies'. Mine were a tweed suit, a trilby hat and a raincoat! Ideal for the weather!

There were no maps between Amman and Baghdad. The RAF had flown air photographs, and our task was to identify features and give them co-ords. After WW1 the area had been divided into separate countries but nobody knew where the boundaries were. We had to mark them. The point where Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia met was on a range of hills called Jebel Aneiza. But where? Nights were spent observing the stars and days calculating positions using 12 figure log tables. Because I had been in the OS Computing department doing this sort of thing and had more experience than others I was given the job. (Closely supervised). I was later told that I had fixed the position within 5 metres.

As someone who had grown up in South London I was surprised how quickly I got used to the desert. It was difficult to drive in a straight line. a bit hit andWadis, soft sand and uneven ground meant using sun compasses (google it) was miss. As surveyors it was assumed that we never got lost! We usually drove out in pairs. One would be dropped off on a hill for a few days and the other drove on leapfrogging each other. It is a strange experience to be sitting on top of a hill. Alone.

The nearest person 10's of miles away. We communicated using morse code. Lights at night, mirrors by day. One morning I woke up and found a Bedouin squatting beside me. I made a brew, we had breakfast and then he walked off into desert. We got to know the Bedouin quite well. They loved our hardtack and jam! At that time two unwritten rules of the desert were – if you had food and water you shared it. Because of that one would never, ever just take another persons supplies. A few weeks later that man brought his family to visit me. The women make camels milk cheese. They squeeze the cheese into tennis ball size. It tasted of sage and had a crust like concrete.

Historically this area, between Baghdad and the Mediterranean, had been well travelled. I re-call several places where the hillsides were covered with graves. A ruin that looked like it had been a church. Paved areas miles from anywhere else. The ruin of a small town or a large fort and built with large blocks of stone, it had a reservoir fed by tunnels running miles out into the desert. Wells just dug into the rock, there was nothing else around .

At the end of my service I re-joined the OS. Had another 6 months course and became a surveyor working all over the country. From the top of mountains to down a coal mine. After a few years of this I married and wanted to settle down. After a 9 months course I spent the next 6 years in Birmingham and the Black Country. This included down as far as Stratford on Avon and Evesham. This was a kind of archaeology. In order to re-survey the OS had to go everywhere from private gardens to Stately Homes. From public places to areas classified as top secret. It was a time of rapid change. Factories were closing and I got an idea of what life used to be.

Northamptonshire was expanding fast and having a family I opted to come here and stay put. I surveyed most of the county and areas close including Milton Keynes before they started building. I am amazed at how much low key archaeology there is within easy reach.

Like so many who retire after a lifetime of acquiring skills and then finding them irrelevant to everyday life I felt a bit surplus.

I was very lucky to become involved with the archaeology of Clasp, in doing the survey and drawing of plans. Hopefully being some help to the many students involved with Whitehall Villa. I come from a time of string and sealing wax. Before all this high-tech that amateur groups can't afford. Hopefully I can pass on some of my experience to those who wish to learn and are prepared to try.