

# ANOTHER DAY IN THE LIFE (OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL GEOPHYSICIST)

June 29, 2012 David Hunter Archaeological Prospection, Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2012, Science, Survey An Archaeological Geophysicist, Archaeology, Australia, burials, business, CCAV, cemeteries, Cemeteries and Crematoria Association of Victoria, Cemetery, Creswick Cemetery, Facebook, geophysics, GIS, GPS, Headstone, historical archaeology, laser, laser scanning, settlements, Stones, survey, Twitter, Unmarked grave, Victoria

When self-employed, a year just goes like *that* <clicks fingers>.

You may have read my Day of Archaeology [blog post from last year](#).

I have since worked in a number of cemeteries searching for unmarked graves using geophysical methods. I spoke at the Cemeteries and Crematoria Association of Victoria conference in April (my first ever conference presentation) and am in the throws of writing my first paper about some work I did over the last year.

I have been undertaking geophysical surveys at the Creswick Cemetery (in Victoria, Australia) for the last year-and-a-bit, tracking down unmarked Chinese graves and an old homestead and associated features (rubbish pits, garden beds, etc.). In all this time, I have been able to test just about every geophysical method under the sun, and so am able to compare the effectiveness of certain methods at detecting certain types of archaeological features. I am hoping it will make a good read. Our data collection phase finished last week, so now it is (academic) reporting time. [The client's report has already been written and is publicly accessible](#) for those interested. Earlier this week, I had a computer issue and lost all of my tax data. Sadly, my taxes are due today. Hence, I spent the last four days doing nothing but my tax. Needless to say, this hasn't been a very 'archaeological' week. Taxes were finished and submitted late last night, thankfully.

Today, though, I am driving back to Creswick, where three cemeteries nearby heard of my work and are interested in my surveying their empty land to look for any unmarked graves that may be present. Assessing each cemetery prior to providing them with a quotation will take me all of this weekend.

I have also branched out into geodetic surveying (i.e. creating maps of archaeological excavations and landscapes) using GIS, RTK GPS and robotic total stations. These technologies are certainly a far cry from the days of old, when we just used measuring tapes and a compass! I've also been using car- and tripod-mounted laser scanners to create full-colour three-dimensional models of archaeological sites, heritage structures and cemeteries (you'd be surprised by how many people

want to look at what is written on headstones in a cemetery far, far away). I'm also looking into using airborne LiDAR for a major archaeological prospection project.

That's about all for me for the year.

And, for those of you wondering, the big settlement project I was getting ready for last year ended up not getting any funding, so it didn't happen. Anyone fancy donating some cash to the project?

Until next year... feel free to stalk me on my [Facebook page](#) , [Twitter](#) and my [blog](#).  
Live long and prosper.