

Archaeology in Northamptonshire 2004

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PREHISTORIC

A509 ISHAM BYPASS

NGR SP 882715 to 877757

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Anne Foard-Colby and Chris Jones on a proposed western route of the A509 Isham Bypass on behalf of Atkins Heritage, acting for Northamptonshire County Council.

Ditches and pits were found mainly in a restricted area near the southern end of the corridor. A small quantity of Iron Age pottery, and some animal bone were recovered from these features. Together with charred plants from soil samples, the remains suggest the presence of Iron Age occupation.

DAVENTRY, BOROUGH HILL

NGR SP 5888 6251

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by David Leigh during groundworks comprising the digging of postholes for fencing to enclose car parking space on Borough Hill, Daventry. This was undertaken on behalf of Daventry District Council to fulfil the requirements of Scheduled Monument Consent relating to the hillfort (SAM No:17145). A number of concrete blocks with the remains of wire cables were noted close by and within the area of car park works. Examination revealed these to be anchor points for a number of radio masts that, up until recently were located in this area of the hillfort. Previous work in this area by NA had not revealed any archaeological features.

HARLESTONE, HARLESTONE QUARRY

NGR SP 708 635

Watching Brief and Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Barry Lewis and Tim Upson-Smith on behalf of CgMs Consulting, at Harlestone Quarry near Northampton to fulfil conditions of a planning permission granted to Barton Plant Ltd to extend the southern part of the quarry for ironstone extraction. Other than an area of modern burnt material, no archaeological features were present.

This was followed by an archaeological evaluation on an adjacent area. Two 10m by 10m trial trenches were excavated over geophysical anomalies. One trench contained a natural glacial feature and no archaeology. The other trench contained three sub-circular pits, forming part of a pit alignment running east-west. Two of the three pits were excavated, neither contained finds.

HUNSBURY HILLFORT

NGR SP 738 585

Geophysical Survey and Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

The NAS commissioned Northamptonshire Archaeology to locate the quarry edge within the Hill fort interior with a geophysical survey in March 2004. The survey revealed a possible edge to the quarry as well as anomalies which could represent archaeological features. Subsequently EAS carried out a geophysical survey of the ramparts.

Between the 19th and 21st March 2004, three trial trenches were excavated within the hillfort interior to confirm the position of the quarry edge. These also revealed a group of 3 large pits as well as other less substantial features were encountered. Comparing the results of the trial trenching with the location of the quarry edge that was assumed from nineteenth century records, it appears that the surviving area is larger than had been previously imagined. The trenching has revealed that there is between 25 to 35cm of plough soil above the natural bedrock of ironstone grits or silty clay, and that no Iron Age levels survive in the area of the trenches. Finds from the trial trenches included Iron Age pottery dating

from the 3rd to the 1st centuries BC together with a single sherd of possible Saxon pottery. In addition, two quern fragments and a loom weight fragment were also recovered, together with an iron object of unknown date, which could be a spearhead.

RAUNDS, WARTH PARK

NGR SP 989 734

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A single trench 45m long and 8m wide was excavated by Danny McAree on land at Warth Park, off London Road, Raunds. The work was conducted, on behalf of RPS Design Limited acting for Kier Warth Limited.

The excavation area was targeted on a pit alignment, identified from aerial photography and partly excavated by NA in 2000. Sixteen pits were revealed and fourteen were excavated, all were roughly rectangular in plan with steeply sloping sides and flat bases. A few fragments of coarse pottery, possibly of early Iron Age date were recovered from four of the pits.

WEEDON BEC

NGR SP 6362 5914

Geophysical Survey

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A geophysical survey was conducted by Adrian Butler and Ian Fisher on behalf of Steve Young of University College Northampton, on 1.08 ha of land at Weedon Bec. Gradiometer survey was carried out and revealed evidence of three sub-circular likely ditched enclosures amidst other small curving and discrete positive anomalies, possibly the remains of prehistoric settlement in the east of the survey area in a region bounded by a gently curving ditch. Most striking was a wide, generally east-west orientated, ditch in the north of the area, possibly a boundary.

ROMAN

DEANSHANGER, KINGSBROOK SCHOOL

NGR SP 7690 3961

Geophysical Survey and Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Geophysical survey followed by trial trench evaluation was carried out by Jim Brown and Ed Taylor at Kingsbrook School, Deanshanger, on

behalf of Northamptonshire County Council, ahead of plans to build a sixth form block.

The application site was a level grassed area within the bounds of the sports field. An archaeological excavation in 1957 investigated remains associated with a Roman villa, including a large walled courtyard that was identified when building work began on the original school buildings. Subsequent excavations in 1972, 1974-5, and 1996 expanded upon the recorded evidence for the site. Geophysical survey and trial excavation have both confirmed the presence of surviving walls in the south-east corner of the courtyard. The results also indicated that the wall along the north-eastern portion of the courtyard had been subjected to severe disturbance after the 1950s building and landscaping works.

IRCHESTER, ROMAN TOWN

NGR SP 266 500

Geophysical Survey and Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A detailed geophysical survey by Adrian Butler and Ian Fisher was undertaken on behalf of Pro-Logis Developments Ltd on land with an area of approximately 8.5 hectares to the south of the A45, at Irchester Roman Town in advance of a proposal for a scheme to dump excess soil from the Victoria Business Park development.

Prospection revealed that the site was divided into two zones. The lower, western zone contained magnetic anomalies which described an apparent north-south orientated road or track, to the east of which were detected a sub-rectangular area of 1.2ha of irregularly gridded ditched enclosures interspersed with pits and four possible ovens or kilns. A putative roundhouse and rectangular building were also detected to the south of the main enclosures. The eastern up-slope zone, was dominated by shallow geological features and quarrying.

A watching brief and pre-emptive excavation by Steve Morris has been ongoing during groundworks in 2004-5.

TOWCESTER, TOVE VALLEY BUSINESS PARK

NGR SP 4965 6901

Watching brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief and a brief salvage excavation in 2003 were carried out by Barry Lewis

during groundworks at Tove Valley Business Park, Towcester for Hampton Brook Developments Ltd. The site lies on high ground some 650m north-west of the Roman walled town. A number of heavily truncated ditches and pits in one area of the site were of Romano-British date, 2nd to 4th centuries AD, and probably represent either part of a minor settlement or the periphery of a larger one.

ANGLO-SAXON

A509 ISHAM BYPASS

NGR SP 882715 to 877757

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Anne Foard-Colby and Chris Jones on a proposed western route of the A509 Isham Bypass on behalf of Atkins Heritage, acting for Northamptonshire County Council.

Ditches and pits were found mainly in a restricted area near the southern end of the corridor. An almost complete Saxon vessel, and some animal bone were recovered from these features. The remains suggest the presence of early-middle Saxon occupation. Most of the rest of the corridor revealed little of archaeological significance.

DAVENTRY, OLD ABBEY CENTRE

NGR SP 5748 6263

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Excavations by Iain Soden and Jim Brown, commissioned by KKAP Consultancy Ltd, on behalf of Stockdale Heritage (Daventry) Ltd, were carried out on the former site of the c1100-1526 Cluniac Priory of St Augustine at Daventry ahead of development.

On the eastern side of the site, next to Holy Cross churchyard, late Saxon pottery was recovered from several inter-cutting pits, together with ditches and a later medieval well shaft.

Fig 1 Daventry Abbey

MEDIEVAL

CHELVESTON, ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

NGR SP 4989 2692

Watching brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief by David Leigh was undertaken during groundworks associated with the installation of a septic tank along with toilet and kitchen facilities and associated pipe trenches at the 13th century Church of St John the Baptist, Chelveston, on behalf of The Parochial Church Council.

The excavation of one pipe trench uncovered a number of graves which were not disturbed. Below the topsoil was a layer, c 0.35m thick, which contained modern ceramic building material, indicating that the churchyard had either been made level or that material had been spread following restoration work on the tower by the United States Air Force.

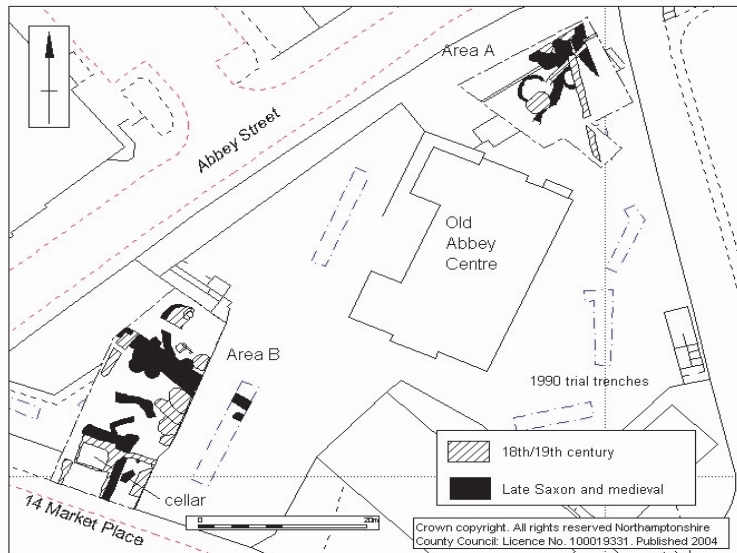
DAVENTRY, OLD ABBEY CENTRE

NGR SP 5748 6263

Excavation (Fig 1)

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Excavations by Iain Soden and Jim Brown, commissioned by KKAP Consultancy Ltd, on behalf of Stockdale Heritage (Daventry) Ltd, were carried out on the former site of the c1100-1526 Cluniac Priory of St Augustine at Daventry ahead of development. Evaluation carried out by NA in 1999 had located some medieval features including



two walls. The site comprised the former Abbey School building and associated land, together with the former park on the corner of the Market Square (Fig 1).

On the eastern side of the site there was a late medieval well shaft, but other features may have been removed by later terracing dating to the 18th century and later.

On the western side of the site, Area B, excavations showed extensive medieval quarrying of Northampton Sand Ironstone for building materials next to the Market Square and contemporary with the priory's occupation. Subsequent deposition of medieval refuse was used to landscape and reinstate the hillside.

GLENDON, COACH HOUSE BARN

NGR SP 8457 8135

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A number of human burials were uncovered during building works as part of the conversion of coach house barns at Glendon to a domestic dwelling. These were investigated by Joe Prentice and removed at the request of the property owner, Mr M Hipwell of Hall Farm, Glendon.

The excavation revealed ten burials, seven of which were removed, the remaining three were left in situ as they lay beneath the level required for the building works. There were four adults, two males and two females, three infants below the age of five and one juvenile, together with disarticulated bones from infants and adults. The burials almost certainly relate to the now lost medieval village and church of Glendon.

HIGHAM FERRERS, CHICHELE COLLEGE

NGR SP 9599 6865

Watching brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A watching brief was undertaken by David Leigh on behalf of K G Wright Builders Limited, during groundworks connected with the refurbishment of the entrance gates at Chichele College, Higham Ferrers, following Scheduled Monument Consent (SMCC No:0302). Only a recent soil layer including modern concrete fragments and lumps of tarmac under a gravel layer was found, no archaeological features or artefacts.

NORTHAMPTON, KINGSTHORPE, GOOD SHEPHERD PRIMARY SCHOOL

NGR SP 75237 63080:

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

At the request of the police, building works being carried out in the grounds of the Good Shepherd Primary School, were examined by Andy Chapman and Pat Chapman following the recovery of human remains. In digging a deep pit, approximately 3m square, to form a sump for a new drainage system, much of a human skeleton was disturbed and recovered by the works contractor. It appears to have lain within a shallow grave cut 0.4m into the soft natural sand, and it is likely that the burial had lain with the head to the east, indicating that it was probably a formal Christian burial. The remains are probably from a female, perhaps aged between the late 20s to late 30s at death. An historic context for the burial can be provided. In 1200 St. Andrew's Priory founded a hospital on the site. Following the dissolution in 1570 the buildings passed into private hands, and the hospital building was demolished in 1928. It is therefore most likely that the burial was of medieval to late medieval date as a deceased patient of the former hospital. Other burials may well lie in the surrounding area.

NORTHAMPTON, REGENT STREET

NGR SP 7524 6098

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Anne Foad-Colby during the removal of concrete footings and excavation of test pits, on land proposed for housing in Regent Street, Northampton. No archaeological remains were present; however, one test pit may have retained a small vestige of undisturbed subsoil 0.7m below the surface. A small quantity of pottery ranging in date from the 10th – 15th centuries was recovered from the buried topsoil.

NORTHAMPTON, 46-50 SHEEP STREET

NGR SP 7537 6082

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological excavation was carried out by Jim Brown at the former Swan Garage, 46-50 Sheep

Street, Northampton in advance of rebuilding, following evaluation. The site fronts onto Sheep Street, one of the principal streets of the medieval town, and produced evidence for 11th-13th century settlement activity within the Norman New Borough.

NORTHAMPTON, ST JOHN'S HOSPITAL

NGR SP 7543 6019

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief by David Leigh was undertaken during groundworks associated with the refurbishment of the 12th century St John's Hospital Chapel, Northampton. The Hospital was founded in 1140 and the chapel was still used as a place of worship for the Roman Catholic Church until the later 20th century when it was sold for secular use, with Listed Building constraints. Floors in the chapel dating to the 18th and 19th centuries were removed to insert under-floor heating and new flooring.

Pottery dated to the 13th century was found beneath the earliest of three former floor levels and this earliest floor level, of beaten-earth, was cut through by the construction of the south wall of the building.

Architectural stonework built into the fabric of the south wall foundations indicate that the wall was built no earlier than c1450.

NORTHAMPTON, ST PETER'S CHURCH

NGR SP 47498 26038

Watching brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by David Leigh during groundworks associated with the re-bedding of paving slabs outside the west end of the 12th century Church of St Peter, Northampton in 2004.

The groundworks comprised lifting the slabs, removing the old bedding material, refilling with new mortar bedding and resetting the slabs. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

NORTHAMPTON, THE GREEN

NGR SP 7507 6030

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A watching brief by Lucy Griffin on behalf of J Goodman, took place during the digging of boreholes and test-pits for geotechnical purposes, at 50 The

Green, at the very centre of Saxon Northampton, within the Scheduled Ancient Monument area. The results corroborate details of 1982 fieldwork which noted that between 1m and 1.7m of modern overburden covers any significant archaeology on this site, which is also truncated by at least one cellar and a buried tank at the frontage.

OUNDLE, 71 WEST STREET

NGR TL 0370 8815

Desk-Based Assessment and Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A desk-based assessment and trial excavation was carried out by Adrian Burrow and Anne Foard-Colby in advance of the redevelopment at 71 West Street, Oundle. Evidence suggests that this area was located towards a focal area of early-middle Saxon settlement. However, the excavation found archaeology dating only from the late medieval period in the form of a quarry pit and a discontinuous surface of limestone slabs.

PRESTON CAPES, PRESTON CAPES MANOR

NGR SP 5766 5488

Geophysical Survey and Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A preliminary geophysical survey and trial trench excavation was carried out by Ian Fisher and Iain Soden at Preston Capes Manor, on behalf of Roger Coy Partnership, in response to proposed residential development of the land. The 11th-century motte and bailey castle (Scheduled Ancient Monument; County Number 13635) still stands immediately to the west of the manor house which probably lies within the castle bailey.

The work consisted of detailed earth resistance and gradiometer survey followed by the excavation of four trenches. Both methods of survey identified a long sinuous feature, probably associated with a footpath. Excavation found two small pits, one of which produced a single sherd of medieval pottery.

POST-MEDIEVAL

BRAYBROOKE, THE OLD RECTORY

NGR SP 76366 84350

Desk-Based Assessment, Building Recording and Watching Brief

A desk-based assessment, building recording and

watching brief was carried out by Alex Thorne and Danny McAree at the Old Rectory, Braybrooke, after Mr and Mrs Thompson have been granted planning permission by Kettering Borough Council to alter the layout of the existing kitchen and lounge.

The Old Rectory dates from the 17th century, but had undergone changes between c 1850 and 1870, mainly with the addition of windows and doors and a new porch, when the first available photograph showed the Rectory's external appearance to be as it is today. A north-south building also existed attached to the east side of the north wing up to c 1926.

The north wing was built onto the Rectory as a service wing in the latter part of the 18th century and further extended early 19th century and the fenestration altered. Two windows were added in the latter 19th century, when the wing was converted into cottages from a laundry. The surviving interior fixtures and fittings relate to its use as cottages. The wing had been disused since the 1960s when the previous owners of the house used it for storage. At this date the north-south building was also removed. A watching brief during the removal of an oak post in the old kitchen saw no evidence of a former stairway in this location.

BURTON LATIMER, POLWELL LANE

NGR SP 887 756

Trial Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An evaluation, commissioned by Brian Barber Associates, was conducted by Paul Mason on 14.5ha of land on behalf of Weetabix Ltd ahead of expansion of facilities, to the north of the Weetabix Mills factory at Polwell Lane, Burton Latimer.

A geophysical survey located only two significant linear anomalies; the one towards the east being a possible remnant of the rail track which served the Barton Seagrave ironstone quarry which operated between 1883-1891/2.

Trial trenching located a number of substantial stone-lined drains which may relate to the quarrying operation. Three undated gullies were also found. One of these may be the remnant of a field boundary removed in the latter half of the 20th century. The other two could be related to late 19th-century drainage.

CANONS ASHBY HOUSE

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A watching brief was carried out by David Leigh on behalf of the National Trust at Canons Ashby House during groundworks associated with drainage and the laying of a security cable for the Shepherd Boy statue in the gardens. A single unstratified stone architectural fragment dated to the late 16th or early 17th centuries was recovered. Evidence of an earlier driveway, possibly 18th or 19th century was identified.

DAVENTRY, AIR RAID SHELTER

NGR SP 5748 6263

Desk-Based Assessment and Building Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A desk-based assessment and building recording was carried out on the air raid shelter at the Old Abbey School, Daventry by Tim Upson-Smith, on behalf of Daventry District Council, prior to demolition ahead of development. No records were found in the Northamptonshire Records Office pertaining to the shelter, although general research has demonstrated that it was probably constructed between August 1939 and June 1940, due to later restrictions on the use of steel reinforcement.

The shelter is divided in two parts and was probably built to serve the school, with boys in one half and girls in the other. After the war one half of the shelter was reused as the boys' toilets for the school, with the insertion of two windows and the installation of six toilets. After the school closed the shelter was partially bricked up and the half containing the toilets was filled with rubble and the building became derelict. It was demolished in January 2004.

DAVENTRY, OLD ABBEY CENTRE

NGR SP 5748 6263

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Excavations by Iain Soden and Jim Brown, commissioned by KKAP Consultancy Ltd, on behalf of Stockdale Heritage (Daventry) Ltd, were carried out on the former site of the c1100-1526 Cluniac Priory of St Augustine at Daventry ahead of development.

A row of post-medieval cottages marked fresh

occupation on the site in the later 18th century and conformed closely to standard models of 18th century Northamptonshire vernacular housing. These buildings, one of which included a fine cellar, are known to have been demolished in the 1960s (Fig 1).

NORTHAMPTON, ROTHERSTHORPE LIFT BRIDGE

NGR SP 72550 56590

Building Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A building record was made of Lift Bridge GN5 on the west side of the Grand Union Canal, Northampton arm, at Rothersthorpe, Northampton, by Alex Thorne on behalf of British Waterways, immediately prior to its dismantling and rebuilding in October due to its dangerous state. It was built in 1815 to enable the farmer access to fields otherwise cut off by the new canal. Although the Lift Bridge was renovated in 1914 and the 1960s, several of the original iron fittings are thought to have been re-used in the structure.

NORTHAMPTON, 46-50 SHEEP STREET

NGR SP 7537 6082

Excavation

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological excavation was carried out by Jim Brown at the former Swan Garage, 46-50 Sheep Street, Northampton in advance of rebuilding, following evaluation. Evidence for post-medieval activity on the site included the remains of a 16th century stone building, constructed at a time when the town was in decline. The presence of nearby clay tobacco pipe manufacture was shown by the recovery of pipe bowls and stems of a type dated to c 1670 and fragments of the saggars in which they were fired were recovered from the fill of a 3.5m deep clay extraction pit. A former 18th century cottage, 46 Sheep Street, was also excavated.

NORTHAMPTON, 47 SHEEP STREET

NGR SP 7527 6084

Watching Brief

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Andy Chapman during soil stripping prior to a car

park extension on former gardens to the rear of the ex Servicemen's Club at 47 Sheep Street, Northampton. The soil stripping did not penetrate to the base of the topsoil, and no significant features or finds were recovered. It was noted that part of the sunken garden to the west, containing a large beech tree some 200 years old, had been dug out in the past to below the level of the natural ironstone, which would have truncated any archaeological deposits that might still lie here.

TOWCESTER, BAPTIST CHAPEL AND MANSE

NGR SP 6952 4845

Desk-Based Assessment and Buildings Recording

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological desk-based assessment and buildings recording was carried out by Iain Soden on behalf of HFP Architects Archaeology on the Baptist Chapel and Manse, Watling Street, Towcester, ahead of conversion to new residential use.

The Chapel was built in 1877 with memorial stones set each side of the door, inscribed MEMORIAL STONE LAID BY MRS J GOODMAN AUGUST 6 1877; and MEMORIAL STONE LAID BY MRS J R DUNKLEY AUGUST 6 1877. Built of red brick, the front façade used yellow stock brick for the quoins, door and window surrounds. The windows were sash with stained-glass borders. A sub-floor baptismal pool for full immersion lay beneath the floor of the chapel. The roof was covered in Welsh slate. The schoolrooms to the rear were built of coursed limestone and ironstone.

The adjacent 19th century Manse may have been brick and stone-built as a single-storey building, but had been raised to two storeys, with a modern ceramic pantile roof.

POTTERS PURY, 1 WOODS LANE.

NGR SP 7603 4326.

Watching Brief

R J Ivens

An archaeological watching brief was maintained by R J Ivens during the mechanical excavation of the foundation trenches and the reduction of the oversite of a small house extension. A stone-built and water-filled well was observed just beyond the NE corner of the new extension. No other pre-modern features were noted during the course of the watching brief and the site had been much disturbed by clearance in the 1950s.

NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

KETTERING, MONTAGUE SCHOOL
 NGR SP 876 802
 Watching brief
 Northamptonshire Archaeology

OUNDLE, LAXTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL
 NGR TL 0419 8814
 Watching brief
 Northamptonshire Archaeology

WELFORD, THE CHURCH OF ST MARY.
 NGR SP 64008035.
 Watching Brief
 R. J. Ivens

THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PORTABLE
 ANTIQUITIES SCHEME, 2004-2005

The years 2004 and 2005 have seen some important developments for the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). In December of 2004 the Department of Culture Media and Sport announced that the PAS would be granted full funding as part of the Renaissance scheme, led by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. This funding runs from 1st April 2006, when the current Heritage Lottery Fund grant expires, until 31st March 2008 and Estelle Morris, former Minister for the Arts declared in March 2005 that ‘we can feel confident that if the Scheme goes on the way it has so far there is absolutely no reason why it should not continue well beyond that’.

The focus for the local scheme over the past year has been to maintain the high level of contact with public finders of archaeological material, whilst seeking to promote the scheme to other potential finders. Contact with existing finders has chiefly taken the form of attendance at the county’s various metal detecting clubs, along with a series of regular finds surgeries held at monthly intervals across the county. These currently take place in Northampton, Daventry, Towcester, Kettering, Oundle, Wellingborough and Piddington.

Promotion of the PAS has included 10 lectures to some of the counties archaeological and historical societies, three weekend finds days and a visit to Greens Norton primary school as part of their living history project. The Midlands team of finds liaison officers also produce a regular newsletter, which is distributed to finders throughout the Midlands. A small team of members of staff from the PAS, myself

included, also participated in the English Heritage Festival of History at Kelmarsh Hall on 13th and 14th August 2005 which proved an excellent opportunity to promote the scheme to hundreds of people who have an interest in the past – people who might take an active interest in searching for artefacts. The English Heritage festival, along with an event for National Archaeology Week at Fermyn Woods Country Park in July proved an excellent opportunity to air the new Northamptonshire PAS’ collection of handling kits.

These kits, commissioned by the Northamptonshire PAS and produced by Vikki Pearson, consist of five period based boxes including genuine and replica artefacts, from the prehistoric through to the post-medieval period. The kits come with interpretative panels and booklets and the public are very much encouraged to handle the objects. Public reaction to these kits has been fantastic, and they have been particularly successful with children. They have proven to be an excellent resource in explaining how we learn about the past, of the work of the PAS and of the importance of recording archaeological objects. It is hoped that the Northamptonshire PAS will be able to increase its outreach to schools with the aid of these educational kits.

A further significant feature of 2005 has been the presence of Robert Webley, temporary Finds Assistant to the Finds Liaison Officer. A proposal to use money under spent in the interim between myself and the previous FLO, Rhiannon Harte, was accepted by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Robert has been in post from February 2005, and is expected to remain until February 2006. Besides assisting me in my daily duties, a major project for the Finds Assistant has been to work on a proportion

of the backlog of unrecorded material from the county. An initial assessment indicated that there were many thousands of unrecorded artefacts from before the advent of the scheme, for which there was little time or resources available to record. Robert Webley has been working through some of the major collections of this material, having recorded 726 objects since February 2005. Whilst recording the entire backlog is an unrealistic task, a significant amount of this material is being dealt with. We can now begin to better understand the nature of large backlogs and consider effective ways that they might be amalgamated into the archaeological record in the future.

Since the last note in *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, the Northants PAS have recorded a total of over 1800 finds onto the national database, bringing the total figure for Northamptonshire to 5151. Amongst the finds recorded over the last year, exceptional examples include a hitherto unrecorded variety of a Roman Denarius of Vespasian, found by Rev Rodriguez-Veglio in the Daventry area...

A further fascinating Roman find consisted of two of three tiers of an elaborate miniature stand, found at Wadenhoe by Mr Ricky Roberts. Similar examples attested in the literature are interpreted as



Plate 1 Two tiers from an elaborate Roman miniature stand

votive model altars, and are usually associated with temple sites.

Mr Jim Possinger found a beautiful example of an Anglo-Scandinavian Jellinge style brooch, dating from the 9th to 11th century AD whilst metal-detecting near Brackley, one of only a few Scandinavian influenced artefacts I have recorded from Northamptonshire.



Plate 2 An Anglo-Scandinavian Jellinge style brooch

A remarkably well preserved medieval seal matrix was discovered by Mr Steve Pulley near Daventry. Mr Pulley's own extensive research has demonstrated that it belonged to the order of the Augustinian Friars. The legend reads '*s prioris generalis ord stis heremitiar sti augustini*' which is translated as '*the seal of the prior-general of the order of the holy hermits of St Augustine*' and the field depicts an image of the prior-general kneeling before St Augustine.

I continue to act as the official Treasure adviser for the county. This role facilitates the running of the Treasure Act, and I am often the first point of call for finders of potential Treasure. Amongst the various treasure cases between 2004-2005 there was one quite remarkable discovery - a late Bronze Age hoard, discovered near Northampton.

The hoard dates from circa 1000 to 800 BC and consists of 56 artefacts, including broken and unbroken axeheads, spearheads, swords and carpenter's tools. It is thought to represent a founder's collection of surplus metal for recycling.

I hope to build on the successes of the past two years and get even more people recording their finds, whilst also expanding the scheme's educational



Plate 3 A late Bronze Age hoard, discovered near Northampton

output in the future. The Portable Antiquities Scheme website can be visited at www.finds.org.uk and finds discovered in Northamptonshire can be viewed on the Scheme's database at www.findsdatabase.org.uk. I am

based at County Hall in Northampton, where I can be contacted care of the Built and Natural Environment Team.

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