



Jigsaw Cambridgeshire
Newsletter – No. 3
July 2013



Welcome to the third issue of the *Jigsaw Cambridgeshire* Newsletter! We have so much news and information to share with you, we've made this a bumper issue.

NEWS

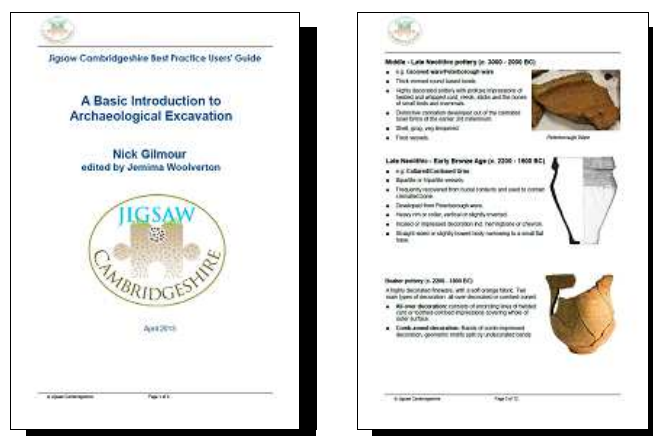
New Archaeology Action Groups (AAGs)

One of the aims of *Jigsaw Cambridgeshire*, besides supporting existing archaeology groups, is to engage new audiences with community archaeology through setting up new archaeology groups with local people. We are pleased to introduce two new groups: **St Ives Archaeology Group (STAG)** (covering St Ives and surrounding villages) and **RamArc** (based in Ramsey). Both groups had introductory meetings in December/January, and spent the Spring getting to know each other, working through a basic archaeological timeline using the *Jigsaw* artefact handling collection, and creating group set-up paperwork. They are now ready to start their first projects: planned projects for STAG include resistivity geophysics, plane-tabling, and hopefully digging a test pit! RamArc hope to make a photographic record of the Abbey College 'Lady Chapel' and will also receive *Jigsaw* training in fieldwalking in September. More information about RamArc can be found here: <http://ramsey.shapeyourplace.org/2013/07/11/ramsey-archaeology-group/>

We have also enjoyed working with **GamArch** (Gamlingay) – another new group which started in Autumn 2012. We ran a fieldwalking training session with them, taught them how to wash their finds and assisted them in writing up their results into a report to submit to the HER. They are conducting their first test-pitting exercise in July. We have also been teaching the new **Warboys Archaeology Project** how to conduct resistivity geophysics and plane-table surveying – see Roger's *Spotlight* report later in the newsletter.

Best Practice Users' Guide

One of the key project aims is to create a set of guidance notes which will form a *Best Practice Users' Guide to Community Archaeology*. We have been busy editing and collating notes from the 2012 and 2013 training courses to form part of the guide, and these are now available for download from the website. These include a write-up of the highly popular talk by Nick Gilmour in Spring 2012 on 'Introduction to Archaeological Excavation', as well as several artefact identification guides. Check them out on the website under Resources-Downloads, and don't forget to check back regularly as we create and upload more.



HER Report Form

In March we launched our HER Report Form: an easy way for groups to notify the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record about research projects at various stages of research:

- Discovery of a site
- Amendment to existing HER record
- Notification that you are about to start research
- Interim report for an ongoing project
- Notification that you have completed research

It can be found on the *Jigsaw* website, under Resources-HER Report Form.

Do make good use of this resource: there is little point in conducting good archaeological research if the findings do not reach the public domain. The Historic Environment Record is the best resource for finding out about local archaeological findings, so it is important that we all remember to contribute to it.

The HER Report Form is not a substitute for writing a full archaeological report for your excavations, to be submitted to the HER, but is a good first stage notification, since reports often take a while to create. We encourage groups to write reports soon after their activities even if they don't feel they have all the information on a site – and to that end we have a report pro forma based on the one Oxford Archaeology East (OAE) uses which groups can use.

Haslingfield Test-pitting 2012

Cambridge Archaeology Field Group (CAFG) and Haslingfield Village Society ran a test-pitting project in Haslingfield last summer, during which a phenomenal 24 test-pits were excavated. Rob Atkins from Oxford Archaeology East helped lead the project, and is currently helping to complete the report to be submitted to the HER. CAFG held an exhibition of finds and results from the test-pitting in Haslingfield Village Centre on Saturday 25th May, which was well-attended. Rob revealed previously undiscovered information about the origins and development of the village uncovered by CAFG's systematic fieldwalking of the parish and the test-pitting. Jemima gave a brief presentation about *Jigsaw*.



The Missing Piece		
Jigsaw Community forum for sharing skills, ideas and news		
	Training Bank Need training? Can provide training? Post here.	1 Topics
	Skills Bank Need someone with a skill to help? Have a skill you can share? Post here.	0 Topics
	Speakers Bank Need a speaker? Want to speak? Post here.	0 Topics
	Fieldwork Opportunities Post here if you have any fieldwork opportunities to advertise.	1 Topics
	Jigsaw Community Blog Keep the Jigsaw Community updated with what you're doing	1 Topics

'The Missing Piece' Forum

Jigsaw participants have requested a forum which would facilitate the sharing of knowledge, skills, speakers and training between *Jigsaw* affiliated groups. Here are some ways this scheme could help your group:

Speakers: local history and archaeology groups are often short of good speakers for groups; this scheme would link up speakers with groups. It will also be a good opportunity for groups to share information about upcoming projects and results with other groups, and to give speakers practice at public speaking.

Skills and training: It has been good to see groups sharing skills and providing training for each other in conducting various archaeological techniques over the past few months. We would like to encourage and facilitate groups to continue this vital work.

We are currently creating a forum on the Jigsaw website and will be keeping you updated as this project develops.

EQUIPMENT RESOURCE

We have been pleased to receive many bookings for our Equipment Resource this year. The Equipment Resource includes excavation, geophysical resistivity, magnetometry, photographic, hand-held GPS and plane-table surveying equipment. See the website (Resources – Equipment) for the full equipment list as well as a *Guide to Borrowing the Jigsaw Equipment Resource*. Don't forget to make the most of this: it is free and available for *Jigsaw* affiliated societies and AAGs to borrow.

New to Jigsaw: photographic scales, optical square and handheld GPS!

Please note that one or more representatives from your group will need to have undergone *Jigsaw* training in resistivity and magnetometry before you can borrow this equipment.



Want consumables but don't want the initial outlay?

Several groups have drawn our attention to the fact that it is expensive for small groups to buy consumable items such as finds bags, permatrace and finds labels, because retailers either only sell them in bulk, or sell them cheapest in bulk. *Jigsaw* is investigating buying in a stock of consumable objects which groups can purchase from *Jigsaw* in smaller numbers than the retailers sell them in. The cost to you would be the same that *Jigsaw* paid for them, in the quantities you want.

We are also creating some First Aid for Finds kits containing all you need for curating 'small finds' such as metalwork you may uncover during excavation or fieldwalking. The kits will be comprised of a Stewart box, a Crystal box, plastazote foam, small finds bags, silica gel, acid-free tissue and an indicator strip. The kits could either be loaned from us for the period of an excavation, and returned if unused, or bought from us for the retail cost.

If this is of interest to you and your group, please do get in touch a.s.a.p. so we have some idea of how big an order to put in for these items.

WELCOME

We now have 15 affiliated groups. We would like to welcome to the project:

St Neots Local History Society was founded in 1981. It welcomes members with an interest in the area and holds meetings on the first Friday of each month. The Society is currently researching information for a series of plaques to be put up in the town. For more information, see their website: <http://stneotslhs.org.uk/>.

St Ives Archaeology Group is a friendly new group meeting at *The Dolphin* in St Ives on one Tuesday per month. It was set up by *Jigsaw* during Spring 2013, and is about to start a geophysical survey of the putative site of the lost St Ives abbey. For more information, see their website: <http://stag2012.blogspot.co.uk/>.

We look forward to working with you!

TRAINING PROGRAMME 2013

Highlights

This Spring's courses in different types of artefact identification and theory of different archaeological methodologies have now finished. Highlights have included:

- Barry Bishop identifying the different types of flint tools constructed through the ages, and the opportunity to look at and handle objects.
- Carole Fletcher teaching how to package and curate artefacts – considerably more complicated than many of us had previously thought!
- Alice Lyons identifying Roman pottery types using her 'portable handling collection in a suitcase'.



Praise from the courses:

"Keep running what you are doing. Their popularity shows the courses are meeting a need."

"This [Flint Identification] course was excellent. I am suddenly able to pick up a bit of flint and I know exactly what to look for, and most importantly, what I'm looking for (and at). Quite amazing."

"Both sessions were excellent. Having pottery which could be held and closely inspected while being explained was just brilliant."

Upcoming

We are now moving on to our practical training courses for the summer. These are in a variety of geophysical techniques (resistivity, magnetometry and processing data using Snuffler), metal detecting, fieldwalking and landscape survey (plane table and off-set survey, and dumpy-level and GPS). Many of these courses have small class sizes to ensure that all participants receive adequate training so are fully booked, but we still have some places available on some courses – booking through the website (Training Opportunities – Training 2013) as usual. The aim of the practical courses is for participants to obtain sufficient training in using equipment or research methodology such that they can return to their local affiliated group and train their fellow group members. We hope you find this useful.

Even though the courses are free, we do expect all those who have booked to attend the courses, and if for any reason you find you cannot attend the courses, please give us two weeks' notice. Many of our courses have long waiting lists, so it is considerate to let us know in good time so we can give unwanted places to others.

Next year...

It's never too soon to start thinking about the Training Programme 2014. We have a few ideas about courses to run, but are always glad to hear what you think your group needs.



JIGSAW AND SCHOOLS PROJECTS

Jigsaw wants to encourage and support our groups to work with their local schools to educate and engage children. Several groups are currently planning schools projects.

Godmanchester school resource boxes

Last summer *Jigsaw* ran a one-off schools project at Godmanchester Community Primary School which included a community excavation. Publication of this site is nearly complete, and a display of artefacts is on long-term loan to the school. An additional grant from the Goodliff Fund has funded six Roman Godmanchester Resource Boxes for the school.



Above: child-size replica Roman helmet

Right: 'Writing and Money', and 'Bathing' Resource Boxes

JIGSAW AFFILIATIONS

CBA East: The East Regional Group of the Council for British Archaeology

The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) is an independent charity that aims to open up the UK's rich heritage for all and safeguard it for future generations. CBA Groups cover the whole of the country and you can join as many as you like, each Group runs its own membership scheme and fees. CBA East covers the counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. It is an educational charity and, as part of the CBA's network of regional groups, aims to involve people in archaeology and to promote the care and appreciation of the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

What do they do?

- publish an annual Newsletter
- host a web page: <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbae/>
- provide information about events and training opportunities
- liaise with other archaeological groups and societies in the region
- committee meetings
- annual AGM
- offer small grant awards (up to £500)
- organise conferences



Annual membership fees are currently £5 for individuals and £7 for groups and institutions. For more information visit their web page <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/cbae/>

You can join your regional group when you join or renew your CBA membership, either through the CBA shop <https://shop.britarch.ac.uk/> or phone 01904 671417. Alternatively you can just join CBA East by emailing CBA East secretary Alison Tinniswood: alison.tinniswood@hertscc.gov.uk

CBA East Autumn Conference 2013

This autumn's conference will explore the Anglo-Saxons in the region with a round-up of recent work. Taking place in Bury St Edmunds on the 14th September, the event promises to be an illuminating day with speakers covering a wide range of topics. Further details will be announced on the CBA East website. Tickets can be booked by emailing cbaeast@archaeologyuk.org

SPOTLIGHT ON WARBOYS ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT - a sub group of Warboys Local History Society

The group held its first meeting on the 1st October 2012 and it's been an exciting and very interesting almost first year. The group, currently fourteen strong, decided to start in the Neolithic Period with the aim of understanding what life would have been like for those first people originally settling into the area. We hoped to get an understanding of the terrain, the changes in the environment, how they progressed from hunter-gatherer to farmer, how they lived, traded and adapted as their environment changed. It was to be our first attempt to trace the human journey in an area, centred on Warboys, from Sawtry in the West, Somersham in the East, Abbots Ripton in the South and Chatteris in the North. To help our understanding we decided to produce a terrain model of our area of interest at 1:25,000 using information from the Fenland Project data for the ancient rivers (roddons) and Ordnance Survey mapping for present day contour data. One of the problems with producing such a model is, of course, that we have no way of knowing how much erosion has occurred but covering the terrain with trees and recording the roddons does give a good feel of what the terrain would have looked like. The model is located in Warboys library and can be seen when the library is open.



With the Spring came the next project which involved being trained by Jo and Jemima at the beginning of April in the noble art of resistivity survey. The previous week Mike Fortune from the Huntingdon U3A Archaeology Group kindly spent an afternoon advising and training the group on using the plane-table and since then we've surveyed an area of Warboys close to the church. The weather this spring didn't help for our resistivity survey, being cold and windy, but we persevered and got a good result for the front of the site but after three attempts have not been able to complete the back of the site. We're still not sure why the equipment hasn't worked too well for us but within a few weeks we intend to try again but instead of using 20m grids we plan to use 10m grid coverage which will make what is a difficult site easier to survey. We have been given the owner's permission to dig two, possibly three, 1m² test pits in August on the front of the site where the resistivity survey has shown interesting readings and hopefully that will enable us to start to build the archaeological knowledge of Warboys.



'What do you hope to find?' is a question we are regularly asked. Personally I'd be happy with a good percentage of Saxon Pottery as that would help our understanding of the Domesday entry for Warboys. Why do we think that there may be some Saxon inhabitants? An Oxford Archaeology East report of an area north of Warboys church produced a number of Late Saxon pottery sherds and it was thought that the Saxon heart of the village would be close to and possibly west of the church. One member of the group enjoys research projects and she is building an historical document on the area we are surveying so that we have as complete a set of information and data as is possible. We also plan to carry out a metal detecting survey and Peter Dight (Camsearchers MDC) came to the site one evening to check, due to the extent of human occupation, that it would be viable to carry out such a survey. There's a lot still to do to complete the background survey and research before we move forward but hopefully we will be in a position to produce our first report at the end of the summer.

If you're thinking of setting up your own group there are a couple of things that we've worked our way through and may be worth a mention. The *Jigsaw* training has been very helpful, I've been on many of the courses and although I'll never have the time to learn all that there is to learn it raises an awareness of when it's time to ask for some professional guidance and help. Being a sub-group of an already established history society helped us to set up the archaeology group as we piggy-backed off the society; it already had a treasurer, chair, committee and constitution in place. Finance can be a problem as the group has to be insured for both third party and employee cover. We were lucky to receive a grant from the Warboys Community Association which covered our insurance for the first year and enables and covers us to use hand tools for test pitting. Good luck to the other *Jigsaw* groups - we hope to work with you in the future.

Roger Mould - Warboys Archaeology Project

GEOPHYSICS UPDATE

We have been bombarded with requests by *Jigsaw* groups to be trained in geophysics and to borrow our resistivity and magnetometry equipment. We have run a number of training workshops with groups this spring and summer and will be continuing to run public courses and train individual groups.

Resistivity (RM85)

The resistivity equipment was available to groups from Summer 2013 so some groups are now very familiar with resistivity and have conducted their own surveys.

Pros: relatively easy to use. The machine beeps satisfactorily when it takes a reading. It's easy to swop between participants at the end of each line.

Cons: set-up takes quite a while since there are several components to put together. Risk of tripping over wires, walking into trees while concentrating, back strain from lifting up the equipment and probing feet!

We have an easy to use *Step-by-Step Guide to Resistivity Geophysics* which talks groups through how to set up the equipment and conduct their survey, and can be downloaded from the website.



Magnetometry (FM256)

Magnetometry is a new technique available to *Jigsaw* groups this year. Jo and Jemima received training in this by Peter Masters of Cranfield University this Spring, and we ran our first public course in June. Both techniques complement each other, since magnetometry measures different things.

Pros: once the equipment is set up, it is very easy to use and the survey is considerably quicker to conduct than resistivity. The data produced is generally more useful.

Cons: set-up requires a lot of tweaking the equipment according to the magnetic response of the area, which can take a very long time. This is not a technique for those with no patience! The equipment is also very heavy: both the flightcase it comes in and the magnetometer.

Peter Masters is creating a *Step-by-Step Guide to Magnetometry*, and we currently have a draft version groups can use. Covington History Group have already been out using the equipment to considerable success.



Processing geophysical data

All this geophysical work leaves us with a slight problem: it creates data which needs to be processed before groups can read and interpret it! So far Jo and Jemima have been downloading and processing this RM85 data in *Geoplot* (software produced by *Geoscan Research* who make our geophysical equipment) when the equipment is returned. We aim to turn around the data within a month of the equipment being returned, but earlier if possible, dependent on staff commitments. This is less than ideal from both *Jigsaw* staff and groups' point of view: *Geoplot* is not the easiest software to use and requires considerable time to process, which Jo and Jemima don't have in abundance!

The solution seems to be for groups to process their own data using the *Snuffler* freeware, which can be found online at <http://www.sussexarch.org.uk/geophys/snuffler.html>. *Snuffler* is marginally less good than *Geoplot* but is easier to use, and free! To this end, we ran a course on 'Processing and Interpreting the Results of Geophysical Survey using *Snuffler*' in June, which was well-attended and well-received. Peter Masters is drawing up a *Step-by-Step Guide to Snuffler*, but in the meantime we have some notes from the course which interested parties can use at their own risk, since we aren't experts in this!

ARE YOU A CORNER PIECE?

Advisory Group

A long-term aim of *Jigsaw* was to set up an Advisory Group to enable the *Jigsaw* Steering Group to discuss the vision of the project with groups, and give participants a platform to talk about what they would like to gain from the project. To this end we will be inviting groups to send one representative to a biannual meeting at our Bar Hill office. The *Jigsaw* Steering Group comprised of Stephen Macaulay, *Jigsaw* Project Manager, Quinton Carroll and Sally Croft of the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team, Jo Richards and Jemima Woolverton will be present at these meetings.

The first meeting was on Tuesday 16th July, and was very positive, with some helpful suggestions provided by the reps present. We will be sending out more information about what was discussed soon.



Attendees at our first Advisory Group meeting

More new Archaeology Action Groups (AAGs)

One of the Heritage Lottery Fund's targets for the project is that we set up at least five Archaeology Action Groups (AAGs) in the course of the project, with at least one in each district. We have set up five AAGs already, but only in two districts, so to that end from autumn this year we will begin recruiting for the following new groups:

- East Cambs group
- Whittlesey group
- North Cambridgeshire group (Arbury, Kings Hedges, Chesterton, Orchard Park).

If you live in any of these areas and would like to be involved in the set-up of a new group, we would be pleased to hear from you. If you live anywhere else and would like to set up your own group, we would also be happy to support you.

Volunteers!

Do you have time on your hands? Would you like to assist the *Jigsaw* team in their work, and/or build up your archaeological skills base?

Oxford Archaeology East (OAE) and *Jigsaw* have a number of volunteering opportunities, ranging from finds washing and finds marking to excavation on OAE's commercial sites. The *Jigsaw* team also need volunteers to help in the day-to-day running of the project, for example helping stock-check our Equipment Resource and assisting Jo and Jemima in whatever needs doing.

We also need one or more computer- and website-literate volunteers to help us monitor *The Missing Piece* section of the website. If you have the time and skills to fulfil this role, we would love to hear from you.

Our volunteer form and Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the *Jigsaw* website, in the 'Resources' section: <http://www.jigsawcambs.org/resources> Thanks.

If you have already registered with us and not heard further – we have not forgotten you! We hope to set up a number of new AAGs in Autumn 2013 – 2014 (see above), and will be matching you to the new groups and offering volunteering opportunities as these are rolled out.

KEEPING UP WITH JIGSAW NEWS

Do keep an eye on our website! It is regularly updated with information, and the blog outlines our various movements. We also regularly update our activities on Facebook and Twitter.

www.jigsawcambs.org

'Jigsaw Cambridgeshire' on Facebook

@jigsawcambs on Twitter

