



Jigsaw Cambridgeshire  
Newsletter - No. 4  
December 2013



**Happy First Birthday to our new AAGs!**

Warboys Archaeology Project (WAP) and St Ives Archaeology Group (STAG) both celebrated their first birthdays this autumn. Around 50 people came to the WAP Open Day in October. The group have had a very successful year, building a detailed physical terrain model of the area around Warboys, mapping the roddons or fossilised rivers. They also testpitted the Manor House garden. Roger Mould writes:

*This, it has to be said, was the most exciting event of the year; finding something that brings the history of the village alive can only be described as a dream come true. We're already planning next year's activities so if you'd like to be part of the project then please speak to any team member.*

STAG have had a busy year since the group was founded last December, and have conducted a number of geophysical surveys and fieldwalking exercises. They put on an excellent birthday bash with displays of finds and the work they have done so far.

*The Warboys Archaeology Project with their 'Roundhouse' cake (above)*

*Elf Jemima cuts STAG's birthday cake! (right)*



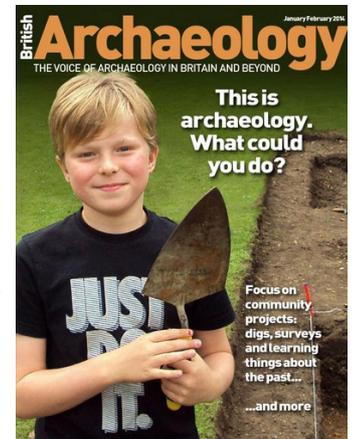
**Report-writing**

Winter is a great time to write up the research projects you conducted in the summer. *Jigsaw* is very happy to help you with this. We have a report pro forma groups can use which makes the job slightly easier. We're also happy to proof-read and advise on your reports. Don't forget that an easy way to notify the Historic Environment Record (HER) about your research is to fill in the HER Report Form, which can be found on our website. This doesn't replace a full report but is a quick and easy way to get basic information about your findings into the public domain.

**British Archaeology Article**

*'Jigsaw: Piecing Together Cambridgeshire's Past: Archaeologists have five years to help community archaeology across an English county. They may be starting a revolution in local research.'*

We have just had a six-page article published in *British Archaeology*, and have also made the cover! Stephen, Jo and Jemima wrote the article, and there are some great photos included. It has really raised the profile of the project nationally.



**Step-by-Step Guide to Dumpy Level Survey**

**Equipment**  
The level kit consists of a level head on a long, stout and tapered...

**Benchmark and Temporary Bench Marks (TBM)**  
Find the nearest OS Bench Mark (BM), which is part of the national height system for mainland Great Britain and forms the reference point for heights above mean sea level...

**Bench Marks can usually be found on churches, but also on other suitable buildings, trees, bridges etc. The database describes where a BM is and what type of permanent or semi-permanent ground it's on. The value of the benchmark given is the height in metres. It's worth noting the nearest BM to your survey site as often it's possible to find you can establish the best way to transfer the height from the BM to your site.**

**In December we were able to use a BM on the north side of the church. The value of this was found in the database: 532229.00 - we were 0.52m, to be exact, points.**

**Best Practice Users' Guide**

We are continuing to produce Best Practice Users' Guides based on the notes from trainers' courses this year, and Step-by-Step guides to techniques such as geophysical survey, off-set survey, and dumpy-level survey. We have also just released guides to identifying *Late Bronze Age and Iron Age Prehistoric Pottery* and *Roman Pottery*, based on the highly popular courses last Spring. These are all free to download from the website.

**'The Missing Piece' Forum**

Back in the summer, *Jigsaw* participants requested a forum which would facilitate the sharing of knowledge, skills, speakers and training between *Jigsaw* affiliated groups. This forum, called *The Missing Piece* is now live on our website. Register on the website to link up with speakers, skills and training, or to volunteer your services! You can also blog about what your group has been up to.

## New Archaeology Action Groups (AAGs)

One of the aims of *Jigsaw*, besides supporting existing archaeology groups, is to engage new audiences with community archaeology through setting up new archaeology groups with local people.

**East Cambs:** Jo recently held a first meeting to form a East Cambridgeshire AAG at Ely Museum. Eight new people have signed up to be involved. There are now about 15 people interested in forming this new group. The next meeting will be held in January 2014. There was much enthusiasm, and everyone at the meeting was keen to start doing some active archaeology in 2014. Jo has also made contact with the project officer from *Rich Soil Rich Heritage*, as there may be some areas of interest that overlap in the study of the Fenland landscape in East Cambs.

**North Cambridge** (Arbury, Kings Hedges, Chesterton wards): launch event on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 8-9.30pm at Arbury Community Centre. Contact Jemima for more information.

If you know people or a group who would be interested in becoming a part of *Jigsaw*, do let us know.

## WELCOME

We now have 17 affiliated groups. We would like to welcome to the project:

### The March Society

The March Society is a fairly young civic society for the market town of March, involved in conservation and preservation, particularly of the many historic buildings in their town. The Society holds monthly meetings and in 2014 speakers include Quinton Carroll on 'The Civil War in Cambridgeshire'.

<http://www.themarchsociety.org.uk/msocmain.php?page=home>

### The Gransdens Society

(see *Spotlight* article later in this issue) <http://www.gransdenssociety.org/>

We look forward to working with you!



## TRAINING PROGRAMME

This Summer and Autumn's courses were mostly practical: how to conduct geophysical resistivity and magnetometry surveys, how to process the data from geophysical surveys using the *Snuffler* freeware, metal-detecting, fieldwalking, plane-table and off-set surveying, and how to use a dumpy-level and basic GPS.

### Praise from the courses:

*"It is comprehensive, but at the right level, and enjoyable. Joining with representatives from other groups opens other avenues for future cooperation."*

*"Both courses were really useful to us and will allow us to operate at a level closer to professionals rather than amateurs. We are hungry for knowledge and you are feeding us!"*

*"The whole thing was really informative and delivered in such a friendly and enjoyable way – the actual walking on the field, once 'primed' with lots of useful info was perhaps the most rewarding part."*

### Training Programme 2014

We hope to run the following courses in 2014, based on the response to the survey sent out in the autumn. Details for booking will be sent out in January – so be sure to book your places early!

#### Class-based training:

Artefact Identification: Flint

Roman Pottery Identification

Testpitting: Process and Recording

Medieval Pottery Identification

How to Read Your Village: Research Methods

Reading the Cambridgeshire Landscape

Writing Project Reports

QGIS Mapping

#### Practical training:

Conducting Geophysical Resistivity Survey (2 courses)

Conducting Geophysical Magnetometry Survey (2 courses)

Fieldwalking (2 courses)

[www.jigsawcambs.org](http://www.jigsawcambs.org)

'Jigsaw Cambridgeshire' on Facebook

@jigsawcambs



## SPOTLIGHT ON SAWTRY HISTORY SOCIETY – Marilyn Gautreaux and Phil Hill

Formed in 1976 as the *Sawtry & District Archaeological Society* following an excavation of Roughts Farm and the discovery of pottery, the main aim of the society was 'field walks'. By the late 1970s the name changed to *Sawtry & District Archaeological & Conservation Society* with a slight variation of focus and undertook a project in St Andrews Churchyard resulting in an award of an Environmental Trophy in 1982. Charity status was obtained in the late 1980s and after many changes of name settled on its current name. The main aims being 'To research, record and preserve the history of Sawtry and other local villages for both contemporary and future generations, create a permanent archive in the form of images, documents, and artefacts'. Meetings are held once a month on a variety of subjects, trying to maintain a local interest. An archive was opened in February 2013 in the Public Library, accessible on a Saturday morning for all to come along.



*Guided walk by the Society on the earthworks of Sawtry Abbey*

*Jigsaw* made contact and reawakened the interest in archaeology that resulted in a group being formed within the *SHS* by Marilyn Gautreaux assisted by Phil Hill BA (our resident archaeologist). On September 14th *Jigsaw* led our first field walk in many years at Abbey farm in Sawtry where members of the society assisted by other affiliated groups recovered over 25kgs of Medieval CBM (ceramic building material) in the form of roof and floor tiles, many of which are glazed, a couple of dozen shards of Medieval pottery and over 120 shards of Roman pottery. Early indications suggest that the roof and floor tiles were dumped from the nearby Abbey at the dissolution and that this medieval dump just happens to be on the site of a previously unknown Roman settlement or farmstead. However investigations are on-going and we are planning to geophys the fieldwalk hotspots as well as parts of the Abbey site in the future.

Phil Hill, Marilyn Gautreaux, Sue Simmons and Alan Bottell have recently started to sort a long-held village archive, some of it dating from the 1970s before the *Society* was formed. The *Sawtry History Society* inherited this material, and has done a fine job of looking after it. However, the main storage facilities in the village are far from ideal, and in November the store was thoroughly sorted. Material has been repackaged and moved to drier conditions so that more work can be carried out in January.

**Upcoming Archaeology Event:** *Sawtry History Society* is holding an Archaeology Exhibition at Sawtry Library on 22nd Feb 2014 from 9.30am to 12.00 noon. Do come along to see the display if you can.

## SPOTLIGHT ON THE GRANSDENS SOCIETY – Martin Davies

The society has been in existence since 1972 and forms a focus for a wide range of local activities as part of its annual programme. It has also established and continues to build a very significant local archive of printed material and photographs. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the past, present and future of the two villages of Great Gransden and Little Gransden. We hold some historically oriented events but also engage with companies working in the villages, take an interest the local wildlife and build links with lots of other related groups.

A striking example of this was in 2012 when the *Gransdens Society* co-operated closely with the villages' dramatic society *The Revellers*; they staged a wonderful series of short playlets in costume at relevant historical locations around the villages. The event, called "Time Travellers", was entirely researched, written and performed by people from the two villages. It proved a great success with audiences and a second group of stories will be performed in July 2014.



The villages are justly proud of their medieval open-trestle post mill. Although there has been a windmill on this site since the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the main post has now been dated through dendrochronology to around 1628 but there were two such windmills in the villages in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. We know which field the second mill was in, but discovering its exact location is something we are hoping to investigate using archaeological techniques. We are looking forward to learning more about these through the *Jigsaw* training courses in 2014. Other current plans include exploring the grounds of the various medieval manors, mapping and surveying them with a view to perhaps undertaking some exploratory excavations in due course.