



ANNUAL REPORT
2019-2020

Chairman's Statement – Alan Pask

I am delighted to report on a very successful year for CRP. We have continued to make good progress with our research aims, in our local management and administration of the project and in developing the skill levels of our members – as well as impressive growth in the number of volunteers joining us. These key areas of progress are evident in the reports which follow.

Excellent organisation and teamwork were important features of the 2019 excavations – beginning at Old Hall and in August at the Temple field site. Rhiane Keeley, a trustee and Deputy Project Manager, led this further exploration of the extramural temple site. A most successful excavation – and we are grateful to Chris and Daniel Skinner for allowing us full access to their field and practical support to the team on site. This was also an important learning experience for the many members and students involved. The geophysical survey we were able to undertake in Caistor Hall Hotel grounds is also an important step, paving the way for long awaited excavations in this key area.

We also made good progress with our community outreach. A key feature of the year has been to make links to Operation Nightingale (using archaeology as a means of assisting injured ex – service personnel) and we are delighted to launch this year our partnership with that organisation and to host a team of people, led by Richard Osgood, at this year's Temple dig.

CRP has long been working with local schools and undertaking tours of the Roman Town for the public. This last year has seen great progress under new trustee Alex Atherton. The regular town tours have continued, with a number of new guides being involved. Packages have been developed for schools and an increasing number have become involved. A handbook has been published jointly with Norfolk Archaeological Trust for volunteers involved in the schools and tours programme.

The Landscape/Buildings Group has transformed into the Tas Valley Farmstead Project to make better use of resources. Much training and development of team skills has taken place, with a renewed focus on rural settlements and landscapes across the CRP catchment area.

CRP has also built on the good links we have with other associated organisations. The Norfolk Archaeological Trust remains a key partner and we envisage this close working arrangement continuing. Our links to the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society have also evolved positively, and we look forward to closer links in the future. We have continued to work with the University of Nottingham, particularly through Will Bowden, CRP Director, and with the University Of East Anglia – including hosting students from both organisations at our summer digs.

Our funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund came to an end at the close of 2019. This funding enabled us to develop as an effective community archaeology group – in particular to give our members excellent opportunities to develop their technical and management skills. We are grateful for that support but now must focus our energies on ensuring that our ambitious future programmes can be properly financed. Much work remains to be done to raise the required funds.

I am especially grateful to all who put so much time and effort into the running of CRP – notably the trustees group, who do a huge amount to ensure CRP continues to be successful.

A message from our Patron, Antony Jarrold.....

Anyone interested in archaeology is fortunate to live in or near Caistor St Edmund. I have lived in a historic house, 'The Old Hall', in Caistor St Edmund for 49 years. I wish I could say it had been the family home for longer or at least since the rebuild following destruction by fire: records state that in 1480, the owner of the house, William Yelverton, "returned from the wedding of a member of the Paston family to find the house razed to the ground following the carelessness of a maid with a candle". The incident is mentioned in the Paston Letters. Thomas Pettus rebuilt from 1568 and each year we are visited by Pettus descendants usually living in the USA. It has been my good fortune to live here and, through CRP members, discover some of the significance of our land to the Roman town, also the many artefacts that have been found during excavations. Two CRP members have carried out, and issued, a valuable report following research on the history of the Old Hall and the land it stands on. Architectural archaeological study of the house remains a future topic.

It is 91 years since Donald Atkinson carried out his investigation and some excavation at Venta Icenorum, and in 1984, the centre of the town gained future protection through the will of the landowner, Mrs Edith Hawkins, gifting it to NAT. In the next few years NAT managed to buy extensive and archaeologically important adjacent tracts of land through its own resources and some very large grants and donations, obtained to a great extent through remarkable efforts of NAT Director Peter Wade-Martins from, amongst many others English Heritage, The Countryside Commission, Norfolk and South Norfolk Councils, Norfolk Museums Service, Anglian Water, and Shell UK. It is now over 10 years since Will Bowden organised the first of several annual excavations which generated local and national interest. The enthusiasm arising from Will's research project resulted in the formation of CRP whose leaders each year put enormous time and energy into summer excavations and events.

Professor Atkinson's excavations produced many hundreds of artefacts which are carefully stored at Gressenhall but sadly he produced no final report before his death in 1963. Recording at the time of excavating, labelling findings, analysis and the final summary and report are immensely vital but demand hours of work and we have to make sure we continue to win praise in this area.

Fieldwork in 2019 – Mike Pinner, Project Manager

As well as another highly successful year in the trenches, 2019 marked the end of four years of HLF support. The last few months were particularly onerous as we had to account to HLF for all we did. Particular respect to Andrew who had a demanding task which ended with us having our account closed by HLF without further questions or comment! Excellent! The root of all that HLF gave us was the ability to train and develop a highly competent community research group and we now enter a demanding period where the 'comfort blanket' has been removed and we have to seek new funding streams.

So, it's goodbye from her.....



The 2019 season started in March processing some of the backlog with cataloguing and reporting on the Dunston Field finds from 2013 fieldwalking. At Easter we were back at Old Hall barn digging test pits. As the number of finds here was small we were more than ready for the summer dig.

Excavating the Romano-Celtic temple was very exciting and it struck me that this was the opportunity to get back in the trenches. It didn't take long to find a replacement: Andy Woodman was enthusiastic to run the barn and has taken on all its functions with gusto. Alex Atherton, although only with CRP a short while, will support him with setting up and running the dig site.

I wish them both well and want to thank all the barn team who have supported the project's work since I took over in 2011. The expansion of the project and the standard of work the teams produce makes me proud and happy and I want to be part of it for as long as possible. See you in the trenches – and yes, the barn – in the future.

Chrissy Sullivan

There have been further developments in oversight with Alex taking over responsibility for the educational strand, Caroline looking after community links and Andy taking over from Chrissy at the barn. Last year, Rhiane led some small scale excavations at Old Hall, principally aimed at refreshing skills for the summer dig. It was an 'interesting time' with further human remains turning up in what is probably the triple ditches and further investigation of a previous test pit where we thought we may have post Roman remains. We did have something; a rather modern drainage assemblage!

I won't dwell too much on another hugely successful season on Temple Field where two phases of the temple appeared as well as an assemblage of Iron Age pot. So, at last, dare we hope that the missing piece in the jigsaw is starting to reveal itself?? We have exciting plans for this year which, as ever, depend on approval from above. However, I think we can expect to be on Temple field again as well as undertaking initial exploration of the field to the south. And then there is the hotel paddock...More on all of that as the plot thickens! And, of course, more CBM!!

... And it's hello to him



I'm delighted to take over the running of the barn from Chrissy who has done a wonderful job for the past few years and is now looking forward to the opportunity to dig again.

The barn, just south of Norwich, is where we store all our equipment and finds (except the valuable stuff!) and where members meet on Monday and Thursday mornings to prepare for excavations and to process finds from cleaning/washing to sorting and cataloguing, prior to analysis and reporting by a mix of CRP members and professional experts. These sessions help achieve an understanding of the overall archaeological process as well as getting to know fellow members in a friendly and informal way.

This year we plan to run training workshops on a variety of topics such as CBM, bones, pottery and on-site recording. All CRP members are very welcome, nay encouraged, to come along, refreshments are provided, and a good time is almost guaranteed.

Andy Woodman

Thank you from the Chairman

One of the 'originals' back in 2007, Chrissy deserves a fulsome tribute for her incredible contribution to CRP's development over the years as barn/logistics organiser. Her work in this role has for many volunteers been their introduction to CRP and Chrissy has played an important part in involving and training our people in many aspects of CRP research. This has been a vital contribution as the project has grown and our researches have become more complex. Outside visitors to the barn are always mightily impressed with the organisation – and the stories that the tools and artefacts tell! But Chrissy won't be going far – she assures me that she'll be back 'on the tools', working on site as a 'regular' volunteer. She has also taken on the role of Social Secretary – helping us all to make the most of this great organisation and the people in it. Chrissy – thanks for all you've done! Now it's Andy's turn – we wish him all the best and hope he will enjoy the challenge!

Temple Field 2019 – Ian Jackson

In 2019 CRP returned for a second season of excavations at the extra-mural temple site at Caistor St. Edmund courtesy of Historic England via a further Scheduled Ancient Monument consent and with kind permission from the farmer Chris Skinner.

The 2019 excavation was particularly informed by the Ground Penetrating Radar survey generously conducted on our behalf by Dr. Tim Dennis. The results of this survey produced great excitement inasmuch as they were highly suggestive of not one but at least two phases of temple development. This information was completely new, bearing in mind that the only previous intrusive investigation of the temple itself was the limited excavation conducted by Miss Mottram as a training dig for local sixth form pupils in 1957.

Three trenches were excavated during the course of the two weeks on site, one targeting the central cella area (TEM6), one the area of the ambulatory to the north west (TEM5) and one to the south of the temple where non-intrusive surveys suggested the existence of more ephemeral features (TEM7).

This article will focus upon the trench located over the central cella area (TEM6) and will of necessity represent some initial findings and thoughts bearing in mind that post-excavation finds processing and reporting is still under way at the time of writing.



TEM6 showing walls of later temple cella, ambulatory and portico running in parallel left to right with masonry beam slot foundation for early cella shown centre image running away from the yellow 'mushroom'!

The overall small finds assemblage was again relatively small but nevertheless significant for a number of reasons which will be elaborated on in detail in the final report. Images of a small selection of finds are included here. These will hopefully give the reader an indication of the quality of the items recovered and indeed the story they may ultimately reveal.

The excavation proved conclusively that the temple was indeed multi-phased, comprising at least two iterations i.e. a 'Phase I' earlier small cella and ambulatory replaced entirely by a larger 'Phase II' temple partially overlying its demolished remains and occupying a much larger footprint. The Phase II temple stood on significant masonry foundations substantial enough to support a two storey cella and an eastern room or portico was added at a later stage.

Coin loss patterns in the area, and the increasing volume of Iron Age pottery produced over two seasons of excavation, suggest the presence of an Iceni settlement in this locality and possibly an associated religious focus here. This might explain the choice of the site for the construction of what is typically described as a Romano-Celtic temple, comprising a central cella surrounded by an ambulatory. An Iron Age coin was found in close association with a mid 1st century AD Romano-British brooch in an otherwise relatively sterile context below the Phase I cella floor, potentially suggesting the presence of votive deposits linked to the foundation of this earlier temple.

Temple Field 2019 – Ian Jackson



Obverse of Hadrian coin

The Phase I cella appears to have been constructed on a shallow masonry foundation with evidence for timber sill beams but with a superstructure perhaps comprising an infilled clay and timber frame. Along a length of the east cella wall an intriguing assemblage of mid-1st to early 2nd century coins were carefully recovered, which appear to have been deliberately buried directly above the demolished wall footings. Several of these coins are in excellent condition and range in date from Nero AD 64–68, through Domitian AD 81–96, Nerva AD 97 to Hadrian AD 121. (*N.B dates relate to date of coin issue*).

The current working theory is that this coin assemblage represents a collection of votive coins associated with the earlier temple, the coins having been inadvertently recovered during its demolition and purposefully re-deposited during the construction of the later larger temple.



Blue glass bead



Torc Twisted Bracelet

One of the key questions arising from the evidence produced to date is the chronology of this site in terms of the relationship between the multiple phases of the temple, the ancillary building (which we now know from more recent GPR work is also multi-phased), and the temenos wall enclosing the entire site. At this early stage it is possible to present a tentative hypothesis of the site's development along the following lines:

- An Iron Age religious focus, which may have been a feature in the landscape rather than a temple in the form of a building.
- Post invasion – during mid to late 1st century AD – construction of the relatively modest timber framed Romano-British temple.
- At a later date, potentially by the mid 2nd century, demolition of the small temple and erection of one of the largest temple complexes in the country, possibly in association with the construction of the large ancillary building, along with the temenos wall and monumental western gateway. This is in marked contrast to the relatively modest scale of the public buildings within the walled town.

Financial Commentary 2018 – Andrew Ray Treasurer

Last year was financially successful. This year remains to be decided. In 2019 we successfully completed our Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project and, with their permission, stretched the funding from three summer digs to four. Funding ceased at the end of 2019 and the final £8430 was paid in January when HLF was happy with our financial reports.

So we turn to 2020. As last year our existence is assured. Our membership fees – about £3000 – and a promised £1000 a year from the Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society covers essential costs including the barn rental, insurance and the other unavoidable expenses.

Test pitting planned for the spring is relatively inexpensive as there is little need for expert external supervision or review of our work.

That leaves the vital matter of a summer dig to be funded. We are working on it....

Full independently reviewed accounts have been lodged with Companies House and the Charity Commission. They are available to all members on request.

The Caistor temple in context – Will Bowden



Plan of all data relating to the temple site, derived from geophysics, excavation and aerial photographs. Aerial photograph data is derived from the National Mapping Programme (data copyright English Heritage National Mapping Programme licensed to Norfolk County Council).

The two seasons of excavation at the temple site, alongside the extraordinary radar work of Tim Dennis, have given us an increasingly clear picture of how the site developed over time. We are now in a position to draw some preliminary conclusions about how the temple fits in with the wider picture at Caistor and Roman Britain as a whole.

Understanding the Iron Age background of the Caistor region has always been a goal of the project and the 2019 temple excavations offered some tantalising hints in this direction, particularly with the finds of quite large pieces of Iron Age pottery in the trench to the south of the temple itself. While stratified Iron Age material still remains elusive, the evidence from the temple, alongside other evidence from the Caistor Hall Hotel and chance finds elsewhere, continues to point to a focus of Iron Age activity to the north east of the Roman town. It is certainly tempting to suggest that the temple site represents an earlier cult focus. Iron Age cult sites were often based around natural features

such as trees or springs and only saw the construction of buildings during the Roman period.

The apparent early appearance of a temple on the site could argue in favour of continuity with an earlier cult. A key discovery of the 2019 excavation was the confirmation that the known temple was preceded by a smaller building constructed during the 1st-century AD. This would make it early in the history of the town, contemporary with the earliest buildings identified by Donald Atkinson and also with the putative timber forum identified during the 2011 excavations in the town. The parallel with the timber forum is also evident in the construction techniques, which used timber sill-beams on concrete foundations, supporting a clay and timber superstructure. This reinforces the impression that the temple site was significant in the town's early history and presence of a cult site on this location plays an important role in structuring the geography of the town. This is no surprise in some ways – the presence of the



Reconstruction of temple, with people to give a sense of scale

diagonal street which connects the extra-mural temple to the temples in the centre of the town points to an axis between the two temple sites, which was clearly significant until it was blocked by the construction of the town walls in probably the 3rd century.

We don't know much about the early site, but the temple is a classic small Romano-Celtic temple of which multiple examples are known from Britain and Gaul. In Britain this type of building is predominantly concentrated in the south.

The Caistor temple in context – Will Bowden



The temple of Janus (Autun) showing the surviving central cella. The slots for the beams of the surrounding ambulatory roof can clearly be seen in the masonry.

A small square central room (the cella) was surrounded by a larger square structure usually interpreted as an ambulatory or as a type of portico running round the outside of the cella. The cella was probably reserved for the use of priests or officials and may have held an image of the deity or other cult objects.

The interior of the cella is characterised by the deposition of a number of coins including a gold Iceni coin and two twisted torc-like objects, perhaps deposited when the first phase temple was demolished. Deposition of coins and other objects at temple sites is common, although the quantities present at Caistor are nowhere near the extraordinary number of finds from other Norfolk temple sites like Hockwold or Walsingham.

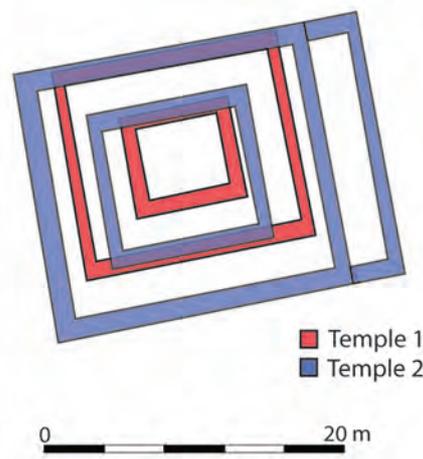
The second phase of the temple was built on a grand scale, which we can tentatively place in the 2nd century, contemporary with other masonry buildings in Caistor such as the second forum and the two temples excavated by Atkinson. The scale of the new temple is remarkable in comparison with the other public buildings from the town. Caistor has the smallest forum in Roman Britain and this is often taken as evidence that the region was impoverished after the Boudican revolt, unable to afford public buildings on a grand scale. The temple, however, measuring around 20m x 20m, was one of the largest buildings of its type in Roman Britain, indicating not only the importance with which the site was regarded but also that the Iceni had the resources to

construct major public buildings if they chose to do so. The scale of the temple would have made it a major landmark in the region, the colossal depth of the foundations indicating a substantial masonry building, with the central cella standing some 12-15 m high. Some indication of the scale can be gained from the still-standing cella of the Temple of Janus at Autun in France. Although the Autun temple is around 25% larger than Caistor, it gives a sense of the monumentality of the building, which would have been an exceptional feature in the Caistor landscape.

The temenos (the precinct surrounding the site) also seems to have changed over time, with Tim Dennis's new radar in the carpark field, clearly indicating that there were two phases of precinct, constructed on slightly different alignments. How this relates to the temple and the ancillary building could be a focus of future work. The completion of radar work on the ancillary building also suggested it was a much larger building than previously thought, perhaps with multiple phases including an apse on its northern side. The function of this building remains ambiguous, although a similar building at the temple site at Marcham in Oxfordshire has been suggested to be a cult building rather than a villa.

The deity worshipped on the site remains unknown, although we know that Venus, Mercury and Neptune were all venerated at Caistor. However, it is possible (and even likely) that multiple deities were venerated. The contemporary site at Walsingham/Wighton has representations of Jupiter and Minerva and evidence of worship of Silvanus/Faunus and we could perhaps envisage a similar situation at Caistor.

In conclusion the two seasons of work at the temple have significantly changed our understanding of the site and it is clear that it needs to be understood as a key element of the Caistor landscape, arguably as significant as the town itself.



Radar plot of temple, plus interpretation based on excavation.

Education and Outreach Report – Alex Atherton

We like to think that Venta Icenorum was a bustling town in its Roman heyday, but modern technology shows that it still is! Since the installation of the visitor counter by the main shelter at the beginning of June 2019 until 5 December, just over 25,500 visitors were recorded going into the site. This does not include people entering by other ways, so is an underestimate of visitors. This averages at 147 people going in each day, with a peak of 520 on Heritage Open Day in September.

Tours ran every Sunday from Easter to the end of September and this year we also ran tours on Wednesday afternoons in July and August. Over this period seven guides conducted 22 tours, taking a total of 150 people around the town site. With other events and around 100 people taking part in the tours on Heritage Open Day, we come to a total of about 300 people for the 2019 summer season. The rota has been circulated among existing guides for this year's tours and I hope that newly trained guides will be able to shadow and add to our numbers.

July saw a small band of five CRP members carrying out a pilot project of conducting test pits at Blakeney Primary School. The pits yielded nothing of note, mainly because the children simply couldn't move enough soil! However, they really enjoyed the day and have written some great 'Thank-you' notes! The school in turn visited the site in September.



We hosted three days of visits by Fakenham Primary School's Yr3 pupils, followed by two in-school mornings. These were highly successful and we had very positive feedback from the teachers. We also spent a morning at Tuckswood Primary school in October, so in total we entertained just over 200 children in their classrooms and 120 on site.

The hardy children of Newton Flotman primary are visiting the site on 5 March and we will be visiting the school during the following week, and we have a number of enquiries coming in for the summer term.

We're really hoping to expand our schools' provision, but in order to do this, we need more CRP members to come forward to help us. We also need more tour guides to be able to maintain the number of weekly tours and to offer interest groups in the area. If you are interested in getting involved in any of our outreach work, please contact me at crpoutreach58@gmail.com.

Acknowledgments

Huge thanks to Andrew Ray, Lynda Bradley, John Davies, Jim Webber, David Smedmore, Di Wuest, Jane Wirgman, Jonathon Herman, Gary Watson, Ralph Moore, Andy Woodman, Stewart Shaddock and Rob Bylett for their contributions to tours and school events. Also to many of the above plus Carole Rowles, Caroline Lowton, Simon Harper, Jenny Press, Jane Gamble, James Davis, Jude Beckett (UEA), Rhys Cowdry-Howes (UEA), Giles Emery, Nat Harlow and Will Bowden for their help and good humour on Heritage Open Day.

Community Liaison Report – Caroline Lowton

The local community is at the heart of CRP's vision, and it is thanks to the commitment and enthusiasm of the CRP volunteers that public interest in the Roman town continues to grow year on year; nowhere is this better evidenced than in the encouragingly larger number of people who attended the Heritage Open Day in September 2019, and we should applaud all the volunteers whose efforts made it, once again, a special event. High visitor numbers to the temple dig in the summer also bore out the general public's fascination and interest in CRP's archaeological activities.

We were pleased to host a group of University of East Anglia students at the temple dig and, by all accounts, they enjoyed working alongside our volunteers, despite the scorching summer weather. There is a strong likelihood that UEA students will be joining us again in 2020, and it is possible that their numbers will be swelled by students from the University of Nottingham. Neil Moss and Giles Emery's hard work in mentoring the students was very much appreciated – thanks must go to them and to everyone else who helped the students understand the complexities of archaeology!

There is an increasing awareness that archaeology can play an important role in the rehabilitation of people who have been wounded or who are injured or sick. There was a gap in provision of this kind in the East England, and CRP are proud to have addressed this by launching a joint initiative with Operation Nightingale. Following a recent visit to Norfolk, Operation Nightingale co-founder Richard Osgood has accepted CRP's invitation for 3 or 4 veterans to join the 2020 summer excavation, prompting significant interest on the Operation Nightingale Facebook page. Many Operation Nightingale veterans already have first-hand experience of other archaeology excavations in the UK, as highlighted on the TV programme Digging for Britain.

We are always keen to engage in PR opportunities for CRP, and so an invitation to a networking event with the Army Engagement Team and HQ 7th Infantry Brigade in February was very welcome; it proved to be a very professional event and we were able to make some helpful new contacts. We look forward to other opportunities to promote CRP's activities through this interesting and potentially very inspiring joint initiative with Operation Nightingale.

Operation Nightingale Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/operationnightingale/>

More dispatches from the trenches – 3 Volunteers' personal views



I was born and grew up in Wiltshire and in my teens and early twenties I worked on various excavations during school and university years, but from the early 1980s married life, football, loud music, and local politics – and the need to earn a living – meant that archaeology became an armchair interest only, ie Time Team on the telly and Current Archaeology every month.

Retirement from Norfolk County Council 31 years later gave me the time and relative freedom to take up archaeology again. At my first NAHRG talk I met Roger and Helen Burnett who described the myriad delights of CRP and suggested that it would be an ideal way for me to become archaeologically "active" again.

Meeting Mike, Chrissy, and others at the 2018 annual meeting, and listening to Alan, Giles, and Will, I felt welcome and immediately at home. There was the same blend of fun, sociability, and serious purpose which characterised my best archaeological experiences from 40 years ago, and I couldn't wait for the Barn to open, and for the excavation season to start.

A year on, and I have put in a fair few shifts at the Barn, failed dismally (but enjoyably) to supervise some lovely Blakeney primary school kids test pitting for the first time, and best of all re-experienced the sheer childish joy of throwing a shovelful of spoil into a barrow some yards away without spilling a drop.

So thank you Roger and Helen, and thank you CRP. I'm hoping my old bones will hold together long enough to give me many more seasons of involvement with this fantastic project.

Stewart Shaddock



Colin, myself and my brother Mick joined CRP 3 years ago after several years with Loddon Parish Studies. Mick and myself, along with two other brothers, Roy and Jimmy, were born in Loddon. Colin is from Jarrow, in the North.

We were trained by Dr Rik Hoggett, who was invited by David and Chris Crease to come along and train us in April 2012, in Loddon. This was just prior to the start of our test pits around Loddon itself for Anglo Saxon Archaeology. Our first test pit resulted in us finding pre-historic flint sherds. This opened our eyes to furthering our knowledge in archaeology and the enjoyment of it. Good days and bad, finds or just nothing at all some days.

When the HLF money ended, the test pits slowed greatly, with less gardens available. So after several years of finding Saxon and medieval pot sherds Mick, Colin and myself decided we'd expand our knowledge by joining Caistor Roman Project. We have never looked back. We love it. We've been with the CRP group for the last three years, now entering into our fourth year. Everyone is so friendly and helpful.

Christine and Colin Hartley and Mick



I joined CRP in spring 2015 after seeing an EDP article about CRP and the big HLF grant. Unaware of Caistor Roman Town until then, I took one of the tours and attended an open day, then joined. My first experience with the group was at the Wymer Field dig that year and what an introduction! An enormous trench and glorious weather. No menial grunt work until I earned my stripes – I was in the hole with my trowel the first day, and was hooked!

I have learnt so much since then, from the excavations and the processing activities at the barn, helping with the geophysics, piecing together a painted plaster 'jigsaw' or attending one of the training workshops. I also attended an archaeometallurgy course at Sedgeford – both educational and hilarious. If you want a furnace built in your garden, you know who to come to.

Not one to stand around during a lull led me to helping with the recording processes. I was surprised but pleased to be asked to supervise a test pit at Old Hall last spring. I then supervised the Temple trench in the summer, an altogether more challenging prospect, trying to keep up to 12 diggers and 6 sievers happy and occupied, and some 93 contexts straight in my head and on paper. It must be my banking background – I am a sucker for a form.

Apart from keeping me occupied physically and mentally, I have made some good friends in the group. And there is always plenty of cake!

Linda Richmond

Publicity – Val Cossey

(From April 2019 to April 2020)

As our Easter digs were on private land and were small-scale, we didn't seek any publicity. The August dig on Temple Field coinciding with the 90th anniversary of start of archaeological research at Caistor resulted in coverage as follows:

- EDP Monday August 19 2019 – "Fresh dig at Roman town comes as double anniversary is celebrated"
- Norwich Evening News Monday 26 August 2019 – "New excavation of Roman town reveals scale of ancient temple"
- Norwich Extra (free paper) Thursday 29 August 2019 – title as previous, but shorter version.

For the second year running, editor Carly Hilts gave us comprehensive coverage in the November 2019 issue of Current Archaeology – "A tale of two (or three?) temples" (pp 36-39), and another appearance in the Edible Archaeology feature in the same issue (p.7), this time highlighting Margaret's knitted trench and occupants.

BBC Online approached us after the August dig to ask if we would write something for their archaeology section, and this is in progress. Examples of articles they have posted recently can be seen at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-48314102>

Our recently agreed collaboration with Operation Nightingale and Richard Osgood (of Digging for Britain), commencing with the August dig, should be of interest to the press, and possibly regional television.

Val Cossey, Publicity/Administration



Tas Valley Farmstead Project – Wendy Shanks

It has now become obvious that there is a lot of crossover between the Standing Buildings Group and the Landscape Group in research focus. To ensure we make the best use of resources these projects have been merged into the Tas Valley Farmstead Project which will focus on the rural settlement – relating buildings, landscape and people in the Tas Valley. The aim of the project is to chart changing land use and organization by developing a wider understanding of the relationship between Caistor Roman town and the surrounding rural landscape.

The learning curve has been steep with workshops undertaken at the Norfolk Records Office on use of archive material as well as extensive 'hands on' training on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) using historic maps of Caistor St Edmund at the UEA. This has been supported by practical survey training on ecclesiastical, high status and vernacular buildings and a field study trip to New Buckenham.

Work has recently been successfully undertaken at Bergh Apton Manor with Dr Richard Hoggett as part of the training programme for the project and an eighteenth-century barn was the focus (see photos). Using this site as a pilot to fully evaluate our approach, we completed a survey which involved researching, photographing and drawing parts of the barn. A report has been produced for the landowner and it has been an interesting first step, with the research revealing the centrality of the barn in the fascinating story of the property's development from a small farm to a country estate. The landowner has been extremely supportive of our work and we look forward to developing relationships with other landowners and the local community in the future.

Our next steps involve identification of existing farms, or properties that have a farming heritage, like Bergh Apton Manor, and this stage is now under way. Using a radial map, we've created five zones, at the centre is Caistor St. Edmund. Within these zones we have identified around fifty possible targets which need to be prioritized. A team member will initially take responsibility for re-researching a designated property within a specified zone. Research will be undertaken including discussions with landowners, tenants and workers to assist in interpretation of existing buildings (as well as those that might have been demolished) and land use. We'll also be utilising resources at the county record office, including maps, title registers, estate documents and sales catalogues.

CAISTOR ROMAN PROJECT

TRUSTEES

Alan Pask: Chairman

Will Bowden: Director

Alex Atherton: Education/Outreach

Val Cossey: Administration/Publicity

Rhiane Keely: Deputy Projects Manager

Caroline Lowton: Community Liaison

Mike Pinner: Project Manager

Andrew Ray: Treasurer

Wendy Shanks: Tas Valley Farmstead Project

TRUSTEE SUPPORT

Operations Manager: *To end of 2019:* Chrissy Sullivan
From January 2020: Andy Woodman

Research/Small Finds: Ian Jackson

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Giles Emery: Norvic Archaeology

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST LIAISON:

Caroline Davison

CONTACT DETAILS

Website: www.caistorromanproject.org

Dig-blog: <https://templefield2020.home.blog>

All other enquiries: info@caistorromanproject.org

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South Norfolk Council

Timothy Colman Charitable Trust

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Caistor Roman Project is a Registered Charity, no. 1131293

Membership

There are now 98 registered and paid up members bringing in nearly £3000 (last year £3150) and we expect a few more to sign up just prior to the dig. The new MemberMojo system has bedded in well with nearly everyone paying with a debit or credit card which is both secure and simple. The system enables us to email our newsletter securely in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and by addressing members personally gets past spam filters very effectively. It also enables members to make an extra donation if they wish – and to the ten who did: thank you!



Caistor Roman Project

