

**AGENDA ITEM: 14**

**National Trust Report for the  
Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum –  
22<sup>nd</sup> September 2004**

**I**

**1 West Wycombe Park and metal detecting**

1.1 Earlier this year consent was erroneously given by the tenant at West Wycombe Park for metal detecting to take place on two fields on the south side of the park owned by the National Trust. This led to the recovery of a significant if not substantial amount of Roman artefact material, mostly coins but one or two items of jewellery. It also included the recovery of a 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century gold ring, which was reported to the Finds Liaison Officer. The ring has been referred to the Coroner and is likely to be declared Treasure. We understand that the County Museum Service has expressed an interest in acquiring the ring.

1.2 National Trust policy normally presumes against metal detecting unless a licence is issued for the purpose. In this case it is thought that continued ploughing of the fields may be causing damage to an unidentified archaeological site. Following a meeting with the South Bucks Metal Detecting Club it was agreed that a metal detecting survey of the fields would take place under archaeological supervision with all finds accurately plotted and any material recovered to remain the property of the National Trust.

**2 Stowe Gardens**

2.1 Northamptonshire Archaeology have recently completed monitoring excavations at the Corinthian Arch at the head of the Buckingham Avenue and at the Buckingham Lodges. These trial excavations were undertaken to assess the nature and depth of surfaces around these structures. The excavations at the Corinthian Arch were also undertaken to assess the dimensions, location and construction of the 18<sup>th</sup> century drive passing through the Arch.

2.2 Acquisition of the New Inn Farm at Stowe is almost complete. The farm was built in 1717 to the designs of Thomas Harris and served as the original entry point and place of hospitality for visitors to the gardens. The buildings are listed grade II\*. A recent visit by the Trust's Architectural Panel highlighted the perilous condition of the buildings and the need for a carefully devised strategy for recording and salvage of already collapsed sections of the buildings. A brief is shortly to be issued for the recording and analysis of the buildings. Bucks Historic Buildings Trust have offered partial funding to support the recording work and the County Archaeology Service have also offered advisory support.

### **3 Waddesdon Manor**

3.1 A Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted to the County Archaeology Service with proposals for the evaluation of the Frog Fountain site below the south parterre at Waddesdon. The fountain seems to have had a brief life but was described in the *Gardener's Chronicle* of 1885. The WSI includes a geophysics survey and trial trenching to assess surviving evidence for the fountain and two flanking urns.

### **4 Bradenham Manor**

4.1 Northamptonshire Archaeology have recently completed a survey of earthworks on Naphill Common behind Bradenham Manor. The Trust are submitting an application to the Forestry Commission to remove a 1970s larch plantation from the common and the survey was therefore carried out so that a strategy can be devised for the movement of vehicles which will minimise damage to the archaeological resource.

4.2 Samples of iron slag have recently been sent to Bradford University for analysis. However, at present no results have been received. The slag is associated with Roman-British pottery and may therefore be of this date.

Gary Marshall

National Trust, Thames and Solent Region Archaeologist