

The National Trust

Report to Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

30th September 2009

Cliveden

At the invitation of the National Trust Marlow Archaeological Society have recently completed excavations over the site of an enigmatic brick structure on the Green Drive at Cliveden. The Green Drive is a tree-lined avenue running north-south along the eastern side of the estate separating the gardens developed by Lord Orkney in the early 18th century from Taplow Common. Part of the drive runs through an artificial cutting and the formation of the cutting has cut through the brick structure in question. It consists of a substantial wall 0.75 ms thick and 34 ms in length, formed of what appears to be 17th century brick resting on rough coursed chalk block foundations. There are side walls defining several rooms on the west side of the structure, one of which appears to incorporate a fireplace. There is also evidence of what may be a cellar. The identity of this structure remains a mystery but the nature of the brick suggests an early 17th century date for its construction. It could be a lodge on a drive to the house built by the Duke of Buckingham c.1670, however, it appears to be older, and could even mark the site of the house occupied by the previous owners of Cliveden, the Manfields. The excavations have been carried out to a very high standard and the Trust are extremely pleased with the contribution from Marlow Archaeological Society.

Stowe New Inn

Northamptonshire Archaeology are about to commence phase II recording works on the buildings prior to the major restoration program commencing in 2010. Watching briefs will also be maintained during the works and to ground works for services and for creating the overflow car park.

Stowe Grotto

Excavations for installing an electrical supply to the Grotto are due to be undertaken in October 2009 and a watching brief will be maintained over these excavations. The Grotto is the Trust's current restoration project at Stowe, which will see the recreation of the marble basins and associated water system, the reintroduction of a statue of Venus and the reinstatement of the 1789s decorative scheme.

Ashridge

A landscape survey report has recently been completed for Ivinghoe Beacon and the Coombe on the Ashridge estate. This is one of ten survey reports covering character areas for the Trust's estate based on historic management units. A report prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology covering the Pitstone and Ivinghoe Commons is due for completion in October 2009. A report covering Pitstone Green Farm was completed earlier this year.

Boarstall Tower

The report covering the excavations undertaken in July 2009 is due for completion by the end of 2009.

Gary Marshall, 24/9/2009