

**National Trust Report to the
Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum**

22nd September 2010

Stowe New Inn – major building restoration works are now underway with a view to completion and opening in June 2011. Northamptonshire Archaeology have been employed to carry out recording of the main structural elements of the building such as roof structures and floor structures. The National Trust's archaeologist has also been recording additional areas of detail within the building. The condition of the buildings has proved to be worse than we had anticipated which has resulted in a greater level of demolition and rebuilding of such structures. The findings of the archaeological recording are too numerous to list individually but groundworks for the new barns (restaurant) on the west side of the main courtyard have revealed brick foundations for a building and underground cistern shown on the c. 1872 1st ed OS map. Within the main inn we have discovered extensive alterations to fireplace openings, layers of decorative schemes including a number of 18th and early 19th century wallpapers, and the survival of an original staircase trapped beneath an early 19th century staircase. We are currently doing some detective work to see if we can accurately reconfigure the system of servant's bells to the surviving cables which run to various parlours and bedrooms.

Stowe Garden restoration – a series of exploratory trenches are currently being excavated to locate the original gravel paths on the north side of the Eleven Acre lake, with a view to their reinstatement. Northamptonshire Archaeology are undertaking the watching brief and recording of evidence. So far some limited evidence for gravelling has been located.

West Wycombe graves – these are reported on under item 14 of the agenda.

Cliveden – a major restoration project over the grade I listed 17th century South Terrace is likely to take place in 2011. This will involve excavating and renewing the clay layer overlying the vaults of the terrace. An archaeological watching brief and evaluation in advance will accompany these works.

Hughenden Manor – an archaeological watching brief has been maintained over a pipeline trench between the manor and the 19th century apple store building where a new biomass boiler is being installed. Little of note has been recorded – the ground appears to be made up of 20th century dump layers. The apple store housed a copying camera when Hughenden was used by the RAF for map production during WWII. Some limited archaeological evidence relating to the former use of the building for this purpose has been recorded.

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