

Archaeology in The Hemingfords Report of Pamela Dearlove, Parish Representative.

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I have nothing to report about archaeology in Hemingford Abbots even though there has been building work undertaken here but you may be interested to hear about archaeology undertaken on your doorstep, which has turned out to be quite exciting. No there were no rich objects found but it was valuable because of the information it provided.

In Hemingford Grey during February and March, excavations and exploration took place on Derek Clifton's land between Mill Road and Hemingford Grey School, and on a plot on the left hand side of Mill Road where a house named Innisfree was demolished ready for redevelopment. These have revealed that this area was once rather busy with people even before the Anglo Saxons got here and also after the people who used flint tools were moving along the river valley.

The archaeologist from Oxford explained that there had been quite a long period of occupation on the land between Hemingford Grey School and Mill Lane. In the garden of Innisfree on the left hand side of Mill Road, Iron Age pot sherds were discovered in some ditches and even a piece of Roman tesserae. They were there because the ditches had been used as rubbish tips. The tesserae find was especially exciting because it indicated that there had been a Roman villa nearby.

The main area of occupation was on the large field stretching from Mill road to the school and it lasted over several phases. Air photographs show signs of enclosure ditches so reveal signs of this occupation. It seems that early Hemingford began here, certainly at least during the Iron Age and Roman period.

Because it covers an extensive area and is the source of valuable information it is likely that for some time the field will be protected from developers who would probably consider the costs of exploration archaeology too high.

As a result of this information the Hemingfords Local History Society, known as HEMLOCS, plan to field walk the area at the suggestion of the archaeologist. This is likely to take place in the autumn. The objective of the field walking will be to see if there are pieces of pottery lying in the soil which can be dated and help us discover just when the earlier peoples of Hemingford were living there.

So no rich expensive finds but definitely exciting.

Pamela Dearlove  
President of the Hemingfords Local History Society,  
and Archaeology Representative for Hemingford Abbots.