

I first got into archaeology when my mother saw an advertisement in a local newspaper in 1955 for volunteers to dig at the Museum Car Park in Verulamium. I got on my bike and cycled the 15 miles out to St. Albans, dug all day and rather enjoyed it - and from then on I was hooked, digging most weekends (it was the beer!)

I was invited to join the Water Newton Excavation Committee (now NVAT) in 1963 as a result of excavations in Normangate Field (see below).

Highlights for me would be the discovery of the "Lion" mosaic at Verulamium and walking into the back kitchen of a terrace house in Peterborough, and seeing the "Water Newton Treasure" lying on a table, still in its dirt and seeing "Must Farm" - simply staggering.

After the Car Park Later, I excavated with John Lunn, the curator of the Verulamium Museum, at Gorhambury, and in the winter I did some work on bomb-sites in London. I met Norman Cook and Ralph Merrifield of the Guildhall Museum (now the Museum of London), and Norman particularly helped me develop an interest in the samian ware (terra sigillata) which was turned up in large quantities.

In 1956 I joined the Frere excavations at Verulamium and spent my University vacations there, sleeping six weeks a year in a tent. Frere introduced me to Brian Hartley, and the foremost authority on samian ware, and we became great friends.

One of the other site supervisors was John Wachter, and when he was appointed to direct the excavations at Catterick, I went there (in the afternoon of finishing finals at the LSE). From 1961 to 1963 Frere and Hartley were involved in excavations at the samian manufacturing site of Lezoux, in France, and joined them there too. Hartley had excavated on the line of the Great North Road (A1) when it was dualled in 1956 with other leading Romanists of the day, and in 1963 I joined him in excavating in Normangate Field, Castor. My full-time career took me away from archaeology, but I kept my interest in my spare time, returning to Castor in 1967 with John Peter Wild, who I already knew from Verulamium and Lezoux. That led to a continuous run of excavations with him in the Lower Nene Valley, including the pottery kilns outside the Longthorpe Fortress and the rescue excavation at Lynch Farm.

Besides NVAT, I am a member of The Middle Nene Archaeology Group (MidNag). I have lectured to MidNag and the Peterborough Museum Society, as well as the St. Kyneburgh Trust on a number of occasions, particularly on the subject of Edmund Tyrrell Artis, who was the "Father of Archaeology" in the Lower Nene area.

Nationally, I have served on the committee and remain a member of, the Study Group for Roman Pottery, and internationally I belong to the *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautores* and the *Société Française d'Étude de la Céramique Antique en Gaule*. I was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London in 1974, and am a member of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies and the Royal Archaeological Institute.

The Longthorpe Kilns was published a Britannia Monograph and Lynch Farm 2. From Throughout the fifty-odd years of my archaeological work I have published numerous reports and analytical articles about samian ware.

My current interest is first and foremost to pass on as much knowledge of samian ware as I have to the younger generation of Roman pottery specialists. In particular, I am deeply involved in a Website dedicated to terra sigillata base upon books written by Brian Hartley and my wife Brenda Dickinson (<http://www.rgzm.de/samian/home/frames.htm>)

Two archaeological heroes of mine are Sheppard Frere and Brian Hartley.