CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 10 November 1994

At our last AGM in Nov 1993 we learnt of the illness of our Chairman and President, Peter Greening. It was with shock and dismay that we later heard of his death; his passing has been a great loss to the Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society. A few people from other societies predicted that the loss of Peter would be a mortal blow from which the Bath and Camerton could not survive. However, the senior members of the committee determined that this was not going to be the case and with hard work and endeavour we have continued to function as near to normal as possible.

The society has been strengthened with the arrival of Mrs Jayne Lawes. We have been very fortunate because Jayne is a qualified professional archaeologist and most other societies do not have such a person in their ranks. The committee believed it appropriate to invite her to be our Director of Excavations, which she duly accepted, thus giving us a greater degree of credibility in the sphere of archaeology. We were also pleased to have join us on the committee as our librarian Mr Hugh Warren. The society has in its possession a number of books and publications and these have now been made available for loan to all our members. Hugh is in charge of the lending out of these books, some of which are very valuable. We trust that those people borrowing them will look after them.

The society, for many years, had been deliberating on whether or not to find its own premises for the holding of winter lectures. Whilst the Technical College had sufficed for our basic requirements it did not fulfil all of them. Peter Greening himself had been inquiring about alternative premises but had been unable to conclude anything. We decided that the time had come to settle this issue. Having viewed several premises in the City it was decided to move to 1 Laura Place. The reasons for this choice are numerous: it is central; there is ample off street parking; it is big enough for the accommodation of large numbers if the occasion requires; has kitchen facilities and it is at an affordable cost.

The winter programme of lectures for 93-94 proved once again to be very successful. There were five lectures in all, arranged by our Hon Secretary Sue Langdon. A broadly based and interesting programme was achieved and those attending found them to be very informative and enjoyable. The numbers in attendance seem to improve with every lecture, culminating with our final lecture in

March 1994 where we had to hastily rearrange our venue to the Technical College Conference Room in order to accomodate about 65 people. It would be marvellous to achieve this figure for future lectures.

Our summer programme of field excursions were also successful. A selection of weekday afternoon and evening, and weekend day trips were arranged by our Hon Excursion Secretary, Neil Anderson. A wide ranging and varied choice of excursions were carefully arranged. Again the numbers of those attending were healthy, averaging about a dozen per trip which was very encouraging. The weather was kind to us, we had mainly dry sunny days for our visits apart from the final trip to Silchester when it rained. An attempt was made to make our excursions social as well as educational by rounding off our evening visits with a visit to a local pub. This seems to have been met favourably by those attending, giving people the opportunity to mingle and get to know one another. There are a selection of non and low alcoholic drinks available these days so people who are driving can still participate in the socialising side of these events.

Reflecting on the year; the society has consolidated its position, which was important considering the loss of Peter Greening, and in some respects has made quiet progress, with other societies now aware that we are still in business. Our membership numbers are holding steady, although we are still finding difficulty in encouraging younger people to join the society. Having targeted the University, the Technical Colleges and the Schools in this area, we still seem unable to attract these students to our meetings and field trips. Perhaps existing members may have a solution to what appears to be a perennial problem.

The society would like to thank our Hon Secretary Sue Langdon for all her secretarial work, this is very time consuming which many people are unaware of and take for granted. Sue also arranges all the winter lectures which is hard work and sometimes disconcerting when she is let down by a lecturer at the last minute. Thanks go to our Excursion Secretary, Neil Anderson, for arranging the field trips. Each site is carefully reconnoitred and consideration is made for the accessibility of sites for our more senior members, again a lot of hard work is involved which can sometimes be taken for granted. Our thanks are extended to our Hon Treasurer, Arthur Clout, who has kept our finances in sound order once again for the year. It is partially thanks to his prudence that we find ourselves to be in such healthy financial order. Regrettably Arthur is resigning at this AGM (1994). After many years of devoted service he will be greatly missed by the Bath and Camerton. We also give our thanks to Wyn Underhay, a most valuable long standing committee member who has allowed us to hold committee meetings at her home, we are most grateful to her. Gratitude is given to all committee members who have helped and given up spare time to assist in the running of the society.

Finally the committee would like to thank all those members and guests who have supported all the winter lectures and summer excursions regardless of weather conditions. Without your support the Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society would cease to exist.

David Higgins, Chairman 1993 - 1994