



The ‘Survey like a girl’ podcast: a project aimed at celebrating female archaeological geophysicists

Kimberley Teale ACIfA (6144), founder of the ‘Survey like a girl’ podcast

Archaeological prospection, or ‘geophysics’, has been around in the UK for a relatively short period of time, historically speaking. As part of this year’s ClfA conference, the GeoSIG celebrated ‘50 years of Archaeological Prospection’, honouring the contribution that geophysics has made to the archaeology sector. Given that the conference closely followed behind International Women’s Day, I was inspired not only to celebrate the contribution of geophysics to our sector, but to celebrate the contribution of women within the profession.

I have met and been mentored by some brilliant female geophysicists, some of whom have supported and driven some of the greatest technological advances to our profession. I wanted to develop a project that would amplify their voices and share stories of discovery and development, to create a legacy to inspire a future generation of female surveyors, and to inspire those in the profession to stand up and make their voices heard. I also wanted to break down barriers in the hope of making the discipline feel more accessible. Even though we walk up

Utilising a G-858 cesium vapor magnetometer in Calabria. Credit: Kayt Armstrong

and down fields for hours on end ‘counting the beeps’ or watching tracking lines on a tablet, we are just like the rest of you. Pretty much.

With a tongue-in-cheek podcast title originating from being told at the start of my career to ‘not survey like a girl’, I dutifully set out to rouse interest and sign up some brilliant women who have made a career out of not only being able to survey like a girl, but by having some of the best brains, voices and determination in our sector. Following advice from the brilliant ‘Career in ruins’ podcast guys, I set about discovering the stories of seven inspiring geophysicists.

Episode 1 kicked off with Emma Brunning, a geophysicist since 2002 – her interview essentially acted as her 20th anniversary. Emma came from the fold of GSB Prospection, and highlights include

surveying on Orkney and taking part in the geophysics for *Time Team* for ten years.

Episode 2 covered the fascinating scientific research being undertaken by Dr Petra Schneidhofer in Norway, with a focus on the influence of environmental factors on GPR and magnetometry, as well as the implementation of non-invasive methods in cultural heritage management. Highlights include having the actual dream job, and driving a towed GPR through Stonehenge.

Episode 3 delved into the fascinating 35-year career of Dr Susan Ovenden, which has ranged from undertaking a PhD under the supervision of Arnold Aspinall, to being a key member of the GSB team as well as one of the founding members of the original *Time Team* geophysics gang; this interview was one of my favourites.

Episode 4 involved a good chin wag with Lucy Parker, reflecting on her career in marine geophysics, landing a dream job with Historic England and delving into her current PhD research into the effectiveness of geophysical survey within archaeological investigation.

Episode 5 covered the interesting research background of Dr Kayt Armstrong. Kayt's research includes geophysics in peatland environments, and three post-doctoral research posts in the Netherlands, Greece and the UK. Kayt has a depth of insight into the geophysical world and her interview is a mine of information.

Episode 6 took a slightly different turn with Alice James – a consultant archaeologist with a background in geophysical prospection. We delve into Alice's history in commercial archaeology and the geophysics sector, as well as her two-year stint with the British School at Rome, and how her knowledge of geophysics has helped guide her career to date.

Episode 7 delved into the career of Anne Roseveare, spanning over 24 years. With a background in chemical engineering, Anne has a unique insight into soil sciences and geophysics for environmental purposes as well as archaeology, which provided a fascinating chat.

To date, the podcasts have had over 640 downloads from the website alone in 38 countries around the world – statistics that I have to pinch myself about. The project has also proudly received crucial backing and funding from the ClfA GeoSIG and the International Society for Archaeological Prospection (ISAP).

Thank you to all who have listened to the podcasts so far – your support means the world. For those that haven't – you can find them at www.SurveyLikeaGirl.co.uk, or on Spotify or Apple podcasts.



Undertaking GPR in Norway on skis. Credit: Petra Schneidhofer



Group shot of the interviewees – clockwise from top left: Emma Brunning, Susan Ovenden, Alice James, Kimberley Teale, Anne Roseveare, Kayt Armstrong, Lucy Parker and Petra Schneidhofer. Credit: Kimberley Teale

Kimberley Teale

Kim is a geophysicist and project manager and has been active in the archaeology sector since 2010, specialising in geophysics and digital deliverables since 2015. With a career in commercial archaeology, Kim has surveyed on most major rail schemes, road schemes, windfarms, and across most of the British Isles. Kim loves a landscape survey, good clean data and playing with shapefiles, and is currently programme-managing and delivering the joys of geophysics to community volunteers for DigVentures.

