Welcome

As winter approaches, this bumper issue of Epistula provides an opportunity to take stock of 2017 and look forward to 2018.

Our reports from the field (page 9) summarise some of the most exciting discoveries that came to light during the summer months. Among the highlights are a spectacular mosaic from Boxford, a ‘new’ archive from Vindolanda, and an unexpected villa in Pembrokeshire. It has also been a successful year for the society, with numerous events providing opportunities to connect with our Roman heritage. Anyone who missed out on a society lecture, or the conference celebrating 50 years of the journal Britannia will soon have an opportunity to catch up on the Society’s YouTube channel.

Our books section provides plenty of options for those seeking stocking fillers in the run up to Christmas. There is also still time to register for the conference on Trajan at the British Museum on the 16th December, while 2018 brings a wealth of events for your consideration. Among them, of course, is the next RAC and TRAC, which will take place at Edinburgh University from April 12th to 15th (for more details see page 4).

Finally, this edition of Epistula introduces two new features that we hope will become regulars: an artefact of the issue (page 13), and an interview (page 7). In the former, Maureen Carroll sheds light on a bronze boar head from Vagnari while Andrew Birley brings us up to date with a remarkable barrack block at Vindolanda.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Epistula, and please do keep sending in your news about research, forthcoming events, and new publications.

Matthew Symonds
Editor

Note from the Chair of the Archaeology Committee

There are so many positives in this issue of Epistula that I hope that you will enjoy reading about. However, not all news in Roman archaeology can be good news. Our thoughts and best wishes in this issue go towards colleagues at Manchester University in Classics and Archaeology who are facing cuts and redundancies. It is a reminder, if any were needed, that your support and passion for Roman and Classical Studies remains vital for its healthy future.

Andrew Birley

Society news

Events roundup

120 members and guests gathered on 4th November for the Roman Society’s conference, Retrospect and prospect: 50 years of Britannia and the state of Romano-British Archaeology, organised by Dr Hella Eckardt and Dr Andy Gardener.

The conference looked back at developments since the publication of Britannia in 1970, and looked forward to
the 50th volume in 2019, and beyond. In addition to a series of 30-minute papers, there was an entertaining ‘lightning round’ of five-minute papers organised by the TRAC Committee. Professor David Mattingly closed the conference with his thoughts on future directions for *Britannia*. Videos of all the talks, plus short abstracts, will be available on the Society’s YouTube channel soon.

On 7 November, Professor Roy Gibson delivered a paper on Pliny (*The next life of Pliny the Younger*). Watch it here on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/c/RomanSociety](https://www.youtube.com/c/RomanSociety).

Leighton House

Members of the Roman and of the Hellenic Societies enjoyed a private view at Leighton House, Kensington, on the evening of Tuesday 10th October. After a glass of wine in the Arabic foyer two excellent guides (both volunteers) took us around the comprehensive exhibition of the works of Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, OM.

The theme of the exhibition, which had already attracted over a quarter of a million visitors in Vienna and in the artist’s native Holland, was ‘At Home in Antiquity’. The expression ‘at home’ is teasing by design, since it suggests an informal social gathering. And that is largely what Alma-Tadema depicted: his Victorian contemporaries, prosperous and cultivated, chatting together at ease in comfortable artistic environments.

The exhibition brought together a number of pieces from private collections and from public ones that would be difficult of access: you’d have to go to Mexico to see the fabulous ‘Roses of Heliogabulus’. The well-informed guides also drew our attention to the works of Alma-Tadema’s wife and daughter, both of whom were accomplished painters.

There was a particularly engaging dual-screen display showing on the left-hand a detail from one of the paintings that clearly served as a model for a film, *Gladiator* for instance, projected on to the right-hand screen. After our hour-long guided tour, we had half an hour to wander at leisure about the rooms, or to return to the foyer to finish up the wine.

Leighton House was itself the perfect venue for this impressive exhibition, because Lord Leighton and Sir Lawrence were particular friends, and Leighton’s own sumptuous residence demonstrates the prestige enjoyed by late 19th-century artists in London.

**Leighton House**

**Dates for your Diary**

There are still a few places remaining for the conference on Trajan at the British Museum on 16th December. Booking forms are available here: [http://www.romansociety.org/events/conferences.html](http://www.romansociety.org/events/conferences.html)

**Right: Bust of Trajan**

© Glyptothek Munich.
We have a full programme of events lined up for 2018. On 27th February, Professor Roger Bagnall will deliver the M.V. Taylor Lecture on *Papyrology and Ancient History: a changing relationship*. On 6th March, there will be a joint event with the Hellenic Society focusing on aspects Greco-Roman cities in Asia Minor, featuring lectures by Professor Bert Smith, Professor Ewen Bowie, and Professor Karen Ni Mheallaigh.

**Aphrodisias: South Agora and pool**

On 15th May (6pm, Senate House), we are delighted to hold a joint lecture with the British School at Rome. The first of a series of two, this lecture will be delivered by Professor Simon Keay on: *Navigating the Harbours and Canals of the Portus Romae: new Approaches*. More details are available here: [http://www.romansociety.org/event/lectures.html](http://www.romansociety.org/event/lectures.html). We are grateful for the support of a member of the Roman Society and the British School at Rome.

The Society is also in the process of arranging a special torchlit evening event at the Roman Baths to see the new excavations, the first significant investigations at the site since Sir Barry Cunliffe led investigations in the 1980s. The excavations will be in an underground area with people admitted in small groups. This event will take place on 22nd February: details of how to book will be emailed to members in due course.

The Society’s **AGM** will be on Saturday 2nd June, and followed by a programme of talks on *Nero: art, politics, culture*. Speakers include Professor Dominic Rathbone, Professor Eugenio La Rocca, Dr Caroline Vout, Professor Matthew Leigh and Professor Catharine Edwards.
Society news

Imagining the Divine: Lectures and visit to exhibition, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

1 pm, Saturday 3rd February 2018

‘Not by one path alone can one comprehend so great a mystery.’ Thus Quintus Aurelius Symmachus on the diverse and liberal culture in which Roman religion flourished.

The Association for Roman Archaeology is delighted to invite members of the Roman Society to a special event centred on the Ashmolean’s latest exhibition, ‘Imagining the Divine’, the culmination of a three-year project examining the development and relationship of the iconography of five major religions during the 1st millennium. This ‘fascinating journey through the art of religions from India to Ireland’ is, according to Mary Beard, ‘unmissable’.

The event will start with Dominic Dalglish of the British Museum and Oxford University, one of the curators, providing an overview of the exhibition. The Roman perspective will then be explored in a lecture by Revd Professor Martin Henig, authority on Roman religion and iconography.

Entry to the lectures and to the exhibition for Roman Society members is £25. Cheques (made out to the Association for Roman Archaeology and clearly labelled) should be sent to The Director, The Association for Roman Archaeology, 75 York Road, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 2JU. For further details, please email arabulletin@gmail.com.

Annual Archaeology Forum

Now in its 45th year, the Regional Heritage Centre’s Annual Archaeology Forum has become the premier regular meeting of archaeologists, both professional and amateur, in the North West. Each year sees a range of presentations on current and recent work, from rescue archaeology and large-scale projects to community endeavours. The enthusiastic audience ranges from scholars and practitioners to local societies and members of the public with a general interest in the subject.

This year’s Forum will be held on Saturday 3rd March 2018 at Lancaster University. It will feature papers on Roman archaeology (recent developments at Vindolanda and Chester), the early Medieval period (St Michael’s in Workington), Industrial archaeology (the Greater Manchester textile mills project), and a presentation on changes to the Regional Archaeological Research Framework. Speakers confirmed so far include Andrew Birley of the Vindolanda Trust, Adam Parsons of Oxford Archaeology North, Michael Nevell of the University of Salford, and Sue Stallibrass of Historic England.

The 2018 Archaeology Forum benefits from the generous support of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, and we are pleased to offer a discount for Society members booking tickets through our online store. An optional lunch is also available. Please visit http://www.lancaster.ac.uk/users/rhc/events/index.htm for more details.

RAC 13 and TRAC 28, 2018

One of the highlights of 2018 will be the combined Roman Archaeology Conference and Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference hosted by the School of History, Classics and Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh, from Thursday 12th to Saturday 14th April. A trip to the Antonine Wall will be arranged for Sunday 15th April.

There will be 30 sessions and over 200 presentations and a full programme and abstracts are available to view online.

Poster Sessions

If you would still like to present, there is still time to submit a poster. Posters are invited on any aspect of Roman archaeology and theoretical Roman archaeology.

Bust of Jupiter © Trustees of the British Museum
Registration


The standard registration price is £90 (£60 for student or unwaged) for the whole event, while day tickets can be purchased for £50 (£35 unwaged).

Further details can be found at:
https://www.ed.ac.uk/history-classics-archaeology/news-events/events/rac-trac-2018
http://www.romansocietyrac.ac.uk/
http://trac.org.uk/

Further enquiries can be directed to rac2018@ed.ac.uk and hca-trac2018@ed.ac.uk

Prizes and Bursaries

Sheppard Frere Prize

The RAC and TRAC 2018 organising committees and the Archaeology Committee of the Roman Society are pleased to announce that the winner of the best and most innovative student poster at RAC/TRAC 2018 will be awarded the Sheppard Frere Prize. This prestigious and generous prize includes a year’s free membership to the Roman Society, a £100 cheque and a book voucher worth £50.

Vagnari Roman Imperial Estate: The Settlement and its Material Culture

A Workshop on Friday, 1st June 2018, University of Sheffield, Jessop West G03, 14.00-18.00

Since 2012, excavations by the University of Sheffield have been conducted at Vagnari, the site of a Roman village (vicus) in south-east Italy that was the core administrative and distributive centre of a rural estate acquired in the early 1st century AD by the emperor.

The workshop aims to present the archaeological research at Vagnari in its wider context and to discuss the impact of Roman expansion in south-east Italy on the culture and economy of the region. Speakers include Alastair Small who, together with Carola Small, discovered the site of

Bursaries

Thanks to the generous support of the Roman Research Trust, the Roman Society is making a total of £4,000 available to support delegates attending RAC/TRAC 2018 in Edinburgh. Further details and an application form can be found at: http://www.romansocietyrac.ac.uk/rac-2018-2/bursaries/

TRAC Bursaries

The TRAC Standing Committee also offers a number of different types of bursary supported by the Roman Society and the Barbican Research Associates. Further details may be found at: http://trac.org.uk/2017/11/bursaries-for-trac-2018-now-available/
Society News

Vagnari and conducted the first phase of fieldwork at the site from 2000, and Maureen Carroll, the director of excavations at Vagnari since 2012.

A key and important part of the workshop is the presentation by the relevant project specialists of the artefacts and assemblages recovered in the Sheffield excavations (pottery, window glass, animal bone, metal).

The workshop brings together these specialists to foster discussion of the artefacts themselves and their significance, and to engage participants at the event in this discussion.

There will be coffee/tea in the afternoon break and light refreshments at the end of the workshop. Participation in the workshop is subject to a fee of £15; Roman Society members pay a discounted fee of £10.

For more information, and to register, visit the workshop website: [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/events/vagnari_workshop_june2018](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/events/vagnari_workshop_june2018)

The conference organiser is Maureen Carroll ([p.m.carroll@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:p.m.carroll@sheffield.ac.uk)). The workshop is sponsored by the Roman Society and the University of Sheffield.

Library News

We are pleased to report that we have recently launched a new website for the Hellenic and Roman Library Fundraising Campaign: [www.hellenicandromanlibrary.org](http://www.hellenicandromanlibrary.org). We have also made a short promotional film about the Library that can be accessed from the homepage of the website, or directly here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xnmu-hn9INs&list=PLO_zkw1RJ8jZxO_t7_VBCJRN41ziqD0yc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xnmu-hn9INs&list=PLO_zkw1RJ8jZxO_t7_VBCJRN41ziqD0yc)

The Hellenic and Roman Library

Distinguished Scholars Honoured by The British Academy

Every year the British Academy awards a number of prizes and medals, and we are delighted to report that this year they include two of our most distinguished Honorary Vice Presidents.

Joyce and Michael are in the middle of the front row, flanking the President, David Cannadine. ©James Appleton

The Kenyon Medal

The Kenyon medal, endowed by Sir Frederic Kenyon, is awarded biennially in recognition of work in the field of classical studies and archaeology.

The Kenyon Medal in 2017 was awarded to Miss Joyce Reynolds FBA (University of Cambridge) for her lifetime’s contribution to the research and study of Roman epigraphy.

Joyce Reynolds is Emeritus Reader in Roman Historical Epigraphy at the University of Cambridge. Her principal publications include *Aphrodisias and Rome* (Roman Society, 1982), *The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania*, with D.B Ward Perkins (British School at Rome, 1950), and *Jews and God-fearers at Aphrodisias*, with R. Tennenbaum (Cambridge Philological Society, 1987). She is a world-leading Roman epigraphist, with more than 70 years dedicated to combining epigraphic recording, inscribed records, and Roman Historical study. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1982.

In the unlikely event that any reader is unaware of Joyce’s enormous contribution to Roman epigraphy and history, you can find more in her Wikipedia entry: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joyce_Reynolds_(classicist)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joyce_Reynolds_(classicist))

The Derek Allen Prize

This prize commemorates Derek Allen FBA (1910–1975), a former Secretary and Treasurer of the Academy. It was founded in 1976 to provide an award for outstanding published work by a scholar of any nationality in one of three fields in which Mr Allen had particular interest. Annual awards are made in turn in musicology, numismatics, and Celtic studies.
The Derek Allen Prize for 2017 was awarded for numismatics to Professor Michael Crawford FBA (University College London) for his significant contribution to the study of Roman numismatics.

Michael Crawford is Emeritus Professor of Ancient History at University College London. He was a Research Fellow of Christ’s College, University of Cambridge, then Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer of the University of Cambridge. His numerous publications on numismatics include Roman Republican Coinage (Cambridge, 1974), Roman Republican coin hoards (Royal Numismatic Society, 1969), La moneta in Grecia e a Roma (Laterza, 1982), Coinage and Money under the Roman Republic (Methuen, 1985), and Imagines Italicae (Institute of Classical Studies, 2011). He has written over 50 articles on Greek and Roman coinage, and on Diocletian’s price and coinage edicts. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1994.

Although Michael does not regard himself principally as a numismatist, his contribution to the field has been massive and lasting. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael Crawford (historian).

Interview

Dr Andrew Birley

Andrew is CEO of the Vindolanda Trust and Director of Excavations at Vindolanda Roman fort in Northumberland, as well as Chair of the Roman Society Archaeology Committee. Epistula (EP) caught up with Andrew (AB) at the end of a remarkable season at Vindolanda (see also p. 10) to find out about the surprising contents of a building that was discovered within the fort.

EP: ‘So, you’ve found a cavalry barrack block?’

AB: ‘That’s right, and we found it where we didn’t expect one to survive. We dug test pits all around the area of the discovery over the last three years, and every time we hit natural boulder clay. And then in this little depression – well I say little, it was about 12 rooms long – in the middle of the site, there was a dip where the archaeology survived in anaerobic conditions with its basic structure intact. The stratigraphy was about 50cm deep, with carpet material, ovens, drip drains, posts, urine pits…’

EP: ‘Horse urine pits?’

AB: ‘That’s right, and because they survived in anaerobic conditions we can do a much larger battery of testing and analysis on it, including looking for horse DNA. All of that process is now underway. But what about the rest of the gear? Well, we’ve found leather chamfrons, cavalry harness junction straps, horse gear, parts of saddle mounts, and of course dung. The real icing on the cake for us was something that we never expected to encounter: two more or less complete cavalry swords. They were in separate rooms, but only about 2 or 3m apart, lying on the floor where they’d been abandoned. One is complete with a pommel and handle, and still in its sheath. The other sword is minus its sheath and pommel, but a very beautiful blade: there’s nothing wrong with it. We were just dumbfounded, to be honest. We’ve found little bits of broken swords before, but complete swords? No.

‘It really got us thinking very hard about what had happened. Why is this incredibly rich assemblage on the floor? It included dice, boots, and shoes, all of the usual sort of stuff, but much more of it and in good condition. You’d expect people to take it away and recycle it, unless they had to leave in a hurry. This is a building that was Vindolanda fort as seen from the air, in a photograph taken by Adam Stanford of Aerial Cam. ©The Vindolanda Trust

Image: The cavalry barrack under excavation. ©The Vindolanda Trust
abandoned just before the construction of Hadrian’s Wall takes place, and other buildings in the fort from that period have issues too, especially the *schola*, which was burnt down. There were no bodies inside it, but all of the meat they’d stored in the main cookhouse had spoiled. The sides of beef and shoulders of ham had been abandoned, and when we excavated it was all sitting in a horrible black goo. It stank to high heaven, because all of the flesh was still on the bone when it went into the ground. That was a disgusting excavation.’

EP: ‘It sounds a bit like a catastrophe deposit.’

AB: ‘But without the bodies. We’ve got everything apart from dead people. We’ve had vessels flipped upside down with their contents still inside. I’ve encountered a lot of rubbish at Vindolanda from a lot of different periods, from designated rubbish sites or pits. The assemblages from these buildings are different, they stand aside from it. A disorganised, rapid loss mess, is the best way I can put it. So why would they ditch all of this material? And are we still only looking at a fraction of what was there, because eventually another garrison comes in and slaps a new fort on top. Obviously, the things that were immediately obvious and shiny were picked up by the new guys.’

EP: ‘So, these finds are coming from the final occupation layer in the barrack?’

AB: ‘The majority are, yes.’

EP: ‘Does it look as though it’s a lived-in space that has been rapidly abandoned rather than systematically demolished?’

AB: ‘It is a lived-in space. The earlier layers are quite clean, which contrasts nicely with that final deposit. They did a good job of keeping their environment clean. In fact, the cleanest part of the barrack was the stables. We found very little on that side. It is a traditional barrack in the sense that you’ve got living accommodation on one side, with an oven, and then adjacent rooms to the west: each of those has a urine pit for the horses, but produced very little other material. The difference was stark.’

EP: ‘So, it fits with the model for a cavalry barrack established at Wallsend?’

AB: ‘It really does. It is not quite a mirror image, but it is very close.’

EP: ‘And I have to ask about the toy swords found in the barracks. Are you getting children in this space?’

AB: ‘Well it’s not just the toy swords, though we have three of them from the barrack. We also have children’s boots and shoes, ladies’ shoes. Some of it very high status and classy. It’s not out of place with what a well-paid cavalryman could afford, but no cavalryman’s foot has
squeezed into those shoes. This is really important. The average at Vindolanda is 40-45% of shoes belong to women or children across the site in most periods. 55% are adult male, but of course that’s not to say that all adult males are soldiers, they could also be grooms or slaves. So, in terms of the fighting force as a percentage of footwear, it may only be 20-30%.’

EP: ‘That’s very different to what might be considered the traditional view of a Roman fort.’

AB: ‘It really is. And this is even in times of conflict. We finished off our excavations of the Severan south fort ditch this year, and the final count for a 15m length of ditch was 476 shoes, of which 42-43 % were women’s or children’s. During that period there was no vicus, so the shoes have come from within the fort. It shows there is a consistent pattern, and this dynamic of male to female ratio seems to be fairly steady over time, regardless of the origin of the garrison.’

From the field

Feline groovy? Riding in style in Roman Norfolk

A recent find by a Norfolk metal-detectorist sheds new light on transport in Roman Britain. The object, a copper-alloy figurine of a tigress, was reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme in 2016 (NMS-DB2ED6) after its discovery near Dereham in the Breckland by Adrian Jarrett. It lay in fields where evidence survives of a substantial and complex Roman settlement. Fieldwalking and metal detecting have produced many other Roman finds, including building materials, coins, and metalworking waste, while geophysical survey has revealed the presence of a substantial rectangular structure or structures.

The tigress is c. 16 cm long from nose to tail and stands with her head turned to the right. On its right side the animal was carefully modelled, especially the texture and colour of the fur. This is best illustrated by the silver- and copper-inlaid oblong grooves running down the back and along the flank, rendering the stripes through colour contrast with the background metal. From parallels elsewhere, the tigress can be identified as a carriage fitting. On the plain left side of the tigress a rectangular slot reveals a hollow centre. This slot enabled a wooden strut to connect the tigress to the carriage body and, although the animal’s extremities are missing, traces of iron shanks in the left foreleg and rump indicate its other attachment points.

The tigress probably came from the front of the vehicle body and acted as one of a symmetrical pair framing a group of figures including the god Bacchus. Images of the god’s entourage commonly feature tigers or other large felines, often drawing his chariot. To our knowledge this is the first discovery of such a fitting from Britain. Deposition of carriages in burials in Rome’s Danubian provinces has allowed the form and decoration of such vehicles to be reconstructed, as illustrated by a full-size example in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne.

Whether the feline fittings were intended to epitomise the vehicle’s luxury (like Bacchic motifs on furniture), deflect ill-fortune, or lend god speed to the traveller, the prosaic reality of wheeled transport in Roman Britain is revealed in the Vindolanda writing tablets. In Roman Norfolk, as in Northumberland, travel by cart or carriage is likely to have been slow, weather-dependent, and necessitating constant vehicle repair. Yet whatever the discomfort, carriages of the type represented pars pro toto by the tigress, found near the junction of two Roman roads (the Peddar’s Way and the route eastwards from the Fens), nonetheless conspicuously exhibited the prestige of their occupants.

John Pearce (King’s College London)
Julie Shoemark (Portable Antiquities Scheme/ Norfolk Historic Environment Service)
Sally Worrell (Portable Antiquities Scheme/ University College London)
Boxford Mosaic

Over the past three years an HLF-funded community project, ‘Revealing Boxford’s Ancient Heritage’, has been investigating a number of Roman-period sites in and around the village of Boxford, in the Lambourn Valley, Berkshire. This summer the project, a collaboration between the Boxford History Project, Berkshire Archaeology Research Group and Cotswold Archaeology, focussed on a late Roman villa and associated barn.

During excavation the building, which was terraced into the hillside, was found to be a relatively small corridor villa, covering approximately 22m by 10m. Despite its modest scale, the building produced some evidence for pretension, including, at some point after its initial construction, the addition of a bath suite. Most notably, however, the excavation revealed part of a spectacular, well-preserved mosaic in one of the villa’s rooms. Given the small size of the building, this came as a considerable surprise.

The ornate mosaic, which can be dated to the late 4th century on stylistic grounds, is decorated with colourful motifs depicting Greek mythological scenes, including the hero Bellerophon fighting the chimera, Cupid holding a wreath, and Hercules fighting a centaur. Anthony Beeson has described it as: ‘without question the most exciting mosaic discovery made in Britain in the last 50 years [which] must take a premier place amongst those Romano-British works of art that have come down to modern Britons.’

It is thought that approximately half of the mosaic has been revealed so far, and the project team hopes to raise sufficient funds to enable further investigation of the site and possibly uncover and record the rest of the surface in the near future.

Tom Brindle and Emily Taylor
Cotswold Archaeology

A new archive from Vindolanda

At around 11am on the 20th June, archaeologists at Vindolanda started to make one of the most remarkable discoveries of the year. They were working 3m below the foundations of the 3rd century town – among a layer of packing for the timber buildings above – when a single, very well-preserved ink writing tablet was found. This small piece of wood was about the size of a modern postcard and covered with ink writing. It had been firmly stuck in the anaerobic mud of Vindolanda for more than 1900 years.

By noon, all other operations at the site had been halted and a large crowd had gathered at the edges of the trenches. That first well-preserved ink tablet had already been joined by another nine. Fifteen more would follow by the end of the day, some virtually complete or confronting documents, others partial, but all located in a rough line along a 4m stretch of ground. They had clearly been dropped by someone travelling in that direction, perhaps carrying a larger pile of documents in a bag or bucket.

As each document was carefully lifted from the earth it was placed into a container filled with trench water to slow the effects of oxygen on the thin pieces of wood. Within an hour of being recovered the tablets had been transported to the Vindolanda Museum laboratory to start the long and difficult process of conservation. There, they were sealed away once more until the 12-16-week long process could be completed.

While conservation was underway, the names of people mentioned in other Vindolanda tablets began to appear: Masclus (who had previously asked for beer to be sent for his men) and Verecundus (the commanding officer of
From the Field

A Roman tower doorway at the Nunnery, Alderney

Guernsey Museum and the Alderney Society have been conducting excavations on the site of a small Roman fort at the Nunnery, Alderney, for eight seasons. This work has confirmed that a tower some 17.8m square (c. 60 pes) once stood at the centre of the fort. Investigations in 2016 confirmed that the tower entrance lay in the centre of its west side and therefore at a right angle to the single fort entrance, which faced north. This is in contrast to published diagrams of the Yorkshire ‘Signal Stations’ that follow a similar plan.

The west wall of the Roman tower survives just below the surface and was exposed from its south-west corner to a return 7.43m to the north (25.1 pes), which we believe to be the south side of the tower doorway. Exposing the inner corner confirmed that the wall was 2.84m wide. Adding the width of the plinth, which lay at Roman ground level and projects c.150mm, gives an overall wall thickness of 2.94m at its base (10 Roman feet). The wall survives to a height of 750mm above its rubble and mortar foundations. Allowing for the imprecision of measuring the damaged stonework, it appears that this wall section was intended to be 25 Roman feet long by 10 wide. Beyond the doorway, the northern half of the west tower wall had been levelled down to its foundations, but by assumption the door was in the centre of the wall, it should be 2.94m wide (10 pes). The full results are published in the latest Bulletin of the Alderney Society Vol. LI 2016-2017.

Jason Monaghan

Geophysical surveys at Durobrivae

The Roman “small town” of Durobrivae (Water Newton) lies just west of Peterborough. Durobrivae is one of the larger “small towns” in Britain, with 21ha lying within its walls, while extensive extramural settlement exists beyond.

The Community Archaeology Geophysics Group teamed-up with Stephen Upex and the Nene Valley Archaeological Trust to undertake three days survey in October 2016. The aim was to assess which of the three main survey techniques — magnetic gradiometry, earth resistance, and ground penetrating radar — would provide good results. In addition, topographic data were collected using a Leica dGPS and a UAV (Fig. 1).

The short answer is that all three methods provided excellent results! The principal problem was a brown dust – possibly from nearby brickworks – that covered all of the equipment and caused problems when it

Andrew Birley
CEO of the Vindolanda Trust

For an interview with Andrew about the extraordinary finds in a Vindolanda cavalry barrack see page 7.
From the Field

Fig. 1: (a) Peter Alley operates the DJI Phantom UAV; (b) Mike Smith with the GPR; (c) Richard Cushing and Stephen Upex using the RM85; (d) the “tumulus” showing in the late afternoon mist

transformed into a sticky slurry in the gears for the mag cart’s odometer.

A comparison between the data for a Romano-Celtic temple gives a flavour of the results. Parch marks in the satellite image (Fig 2. top-right) show the roads around the temple, while close examination provides a hint of the building plan.

The Earth Resistance data (Fig. 2 top-left) portrays the temple very clearly as a double-square of low resistance readings (shown in white). It is enlightening to contrast this with the magnetometry data (Fig 2. bottom-right), where the structure of the temple does not show, but large magnetic features rendered in black occur to the north and south. These are probably pits containing burnt materials and/or organics.

The GPR time-slice (Fig. 2 bottom-left) clearly reveal the road around the temple complex, whereas the building itself is shown as a lack of radar reflections (in white). Detailed examination of the radar data by Lawrence Conyers (University of Denver) shows that within the foundations of the temple, the deposits are largely free of rubble and debris, which is why, along with the foundations themselves, water has been retained leading to the low earth resistance readings. A more detailed discussion of the results is available on the project blog (https://hertsgeosurvey.wordpress.com/category/durobri vae/).

Having shown the value of all methods, CAGG is teaming-up with Stephen and the local groups again this autumn to extend the survey. This will take in the mysterious mound referred to as a “tumulus” in the early reports.

Kris Lockyear (Institute of Archaeology, UCL) and Ruth Halliwell (Welwyn Archaeological Society)

A new Roman villa in Pembrokeshire

In 2016, a team led by Professor Kate Welham undertook a series of magnetic gradiometer surveys as part of the Stones of Stonehenge (SoS) project directed by Professor Mike Parker-Pearson (UCL), with partners. One of the fields surveyed was targeted because of a low mound visible in the LiDAR data. Much to the team’s surprise, the results looked very much like a Roman corridor villa within an enclosure, with a separate square enclosure downslope.

In the next field, the survey revealed a large D-shaped enclosure, which is a common form of Iron Age site in this part of south-west Wales.

In 2017, Andrew Gardner and Kris Lockyear (UCL) undertook a short field season, under the auspices of the SoS project, to confirm the identification. Kris undertook a small GPR survey over the building, and over the smaller rectangular enclosure. The survey of the structure revealed clear wall lines and indicated a rectangular building within an enclosure wall. The second enclosure was not visible in the GPR data and probably has a ditched boundary.

On the basis of this survey, two small trenches were opened. The first was 6m by 2m and placed over one of the walls of the structure. The second was 2m by 2m and positioned over the enclosure wall. Roofing materials were
From the Field/Artefact of the Issue

encountered almost immediately beneath the turf, including hexagonal slates with a single upper hole, and ceramic imbrices; other finds included part of a quern stone, a very small assemblage of pottery and some ferrous objects, all confirming the dating of the structure to the Roman period.

The most remarkable aspect of this find is its location in the far west of Wales, and as a consequence we are seeking funding to undertake a fuller investigation.

Andrew Gardner (UCL), Kris Lockyear (UCL) and Kate Welham (Bournemouth University)

Evidence for the presence of the Ala Sebosiana in the early years of the Roman occupation of Scotland is supported by the discovery of a gravestone for a cavalryman called Crescens, buried near Inveresk. He died in his early 30s, and was one of Agricola’s bodyguards (the Equites Singulares).

In sum, this small lead seal has made an important contribution to our knowledge of the early years of the Roman occupation of Scotland.

Ed Archer
Chairman, Lanark and District Archaeological Society

Artefact of the Issue

A Cast Bronze Boar’s Head from Vagnari

Artefact of the Issue is a new feature to Epistula where we will be focussing in detail on a particular Roman find. The artefact featured in this issue is a cast bronze boar’s head from the central village (vicus) of the Roman imperial estate at Vagnari in south-east Italy.

The head is of very good quality, and the animal’s facial features, fur, ears, and tusks are modelled in fine detail. The neck of the boar emerges out of a leaf chalice. This head is the end of a handle of a cast bronze oil lamp, the handle at its base having been attached to the back of the body of the lamp. The handle will have curved forward to hover just above the oil reservoir of the letters revealed that a member of the Ala Sebosiana was aide de camp to Agricola. So, the unit came to Castledykes as part of the invasion force to Scotland.

During fieldwalking at Castledykes about 20 years ago, a lead seal was found with the letters A.SEB on it. This was handed in to the Hunterian Museum, where Professor Laurence Keppie identified it as having connections with the Ala Sebosiana Gallorum: a 500-strong cavalry unit.

This unit had backed the wrong side in the Year of the Four Emperors (AD 69), when it supported Vitellius’s bid for the purple. Following that episode, the unit was moved to Carlisle from its previous base in Germany. Its presence at Carlisle was attested by letters dating back to the period of Agricola’s governorship, which were found by Mike McCarthy during excavation work at Carlisle. One of these
lamp, with the boar’s head facing the nozzle. Similar animal terminals on the handles of bronze lamps from other Roman sites include the heads of horses, lions, and even ducks, and almost all of them grow out of a calyx of leaves.

Bronze lamps with animal heads represent costly items that were used to illuminate rooms in domestic buildings. The boar’s head from Vagnari was retrieved from a mixed deposit of Roman material and modern plough soil and cannot be precisely dated by its context. Most parallels, however, date to the 1st or 2nd century AD, with several examples found among the debris of the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 at Pompeii. Some of the Pompeian lamps rested on a tall bronze shaft or candelabrum, but we cannot know if this was also the case with the Vagnari lamp.

The example from Vagnari is the only one of its kind found at the site, and it stands out among the far less expensive oil lamps made of clay that are found in many contexts in the Roman settlement and its cemetery.

Maureen Carroll
University of Sheffield

For an opportunity to learn more about the material culture of Vagnari see page 4.

Literary and Historical

The politics of classical allusion? ‘Strong and stable leadership’

The world of knowledge exchange and impact encourages the classicist and ancient historian to establish connections from their work and knowledge to modern society. Used the other way around, the scholar’s work and knowledge may be employed to reveal efforts on the part of modern society to draw on the worlds of Greece and Rome in their non-classical endeavours.

‘Strong and stable leadership’ is a case in point. The phrase was repeatedly utilised by Mrs Theresa May, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in the run-up to the 2017 General Elections. The qualifying terms – ‘strong’ and ‘stable’ – have been mobilised before by politicians to persuade their audiences, but the joint concoction promises a new departure. There has been much discussion as to the source or inspiration of the slogan. Perhaps we will never know. But the concoction is of course reminiscent of another one that was in circulation in a different age –
Ancient historians and classicists will also be familiar with endeavours. In the knowledge that the object of their study serves to inspire modern politicians in their gubernatorial prediction of ‘strong and stable leadership’ has been with, also parts of the geography for which the new period than the one Book 1 of Livy’s stayed put, its boundaries moved, to comprise, in a later place. Terminus, synonym for the city’s boundaries, was not to be moved.

Livy’s history of Rome is known under the title *Ab urbe condita* – ‘from the foundation of the city’; it describes the meteoric rise of a small Italian city-state among many to a superpower *sui generis*, over and above its neighbours far and wide. *firma stabiliaque* does of course encompass a wide range of meanings. Most render the words in question as ‘steadfast and stable’, or similarly, emphasising next to its strength also the longevity that the empire seeks to project.

The classically trained scholar might be tempted to go beyond coincidence and speak of a deliberate calque of Livy’s imperial prediction in May’s political promise; perhaps even an allusion, or indeed an intertext. The context may corroborate this notion. Thus, the prediction of Rome’s strength and longevity is followed in Livy’s narrative by the account of the discovery of a human head during the foundation works for the temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline Hill, traditionally ascribed to King Tarquinius: Livy notes that the appearance of the human head ‘plainly foreshowed that here was to be the citadel of the empire and the head of the world’ (*Quae visa species haud per ambages arcem eam imperii caputque rerum fore portendebat...*, 1.55.6).

The promise of ‘strong and stable leadership’ is tied up in contemporary discourse with the safety of Britain’s borders, and the broader question of where those borders should rest, and under whose authority. The prediction of Rome’s enduring future greatness, placed in the *Ab urbe condita* in the period for which modern archaeologists have revealed signs of primitive settlement in the area of the (later) city, is coupled with the gods’ wish to keep the shrine of one among their ranks, Terminus, in its ancestral place. Terminus, synonym for the city’s boundaries, was not to be moved.

Unlike Britain, Rome was no island; and while Terminus stayed put, its boundaries moved, to comprise, in a later period than the one Book 1 of Livy’s *AVC* concerns itself with, also parts of the geography for which the new prediction of ‘strong and stable leadership’ has been proposed. Ancient historians and classicists can take pride in the knowledge that the object of their study serves to reflect on modern politics, and that it may even serve to inspire modern politicians in their gubernatorial endeavours.

Ancient historians and classicists will also be familiar with the sequel to the story told in the *AVC*, by a later Roman historian: what happened to political liberty in ancient Rome when Rome expended substantial amounts of energy on keeping the empire within its bounds is the subject of Tacitus’ pained analysis of civic freedom in the *Annals*.

Livy regarded the business of history as consisting of providing good and bad examples of past behaviour to inform political conduct: from these examples of past behaviour, the reader is instructed to ‘select for yourself and for your country what to emulate, and what to avoid of that which is shameful in conception and shameful in the result’ (*... inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu, foedum exitu, quod vites*, *praef*. 10).

To do so, the reader needs to move beyond Book 1 of the *AVC*, and beyond the *AVC* itself, to take account of the full story, from start to finish, from rise to decline, to gain a stronger and more stable foothold on what the prediction of Rome’s future greatness actually entailed in the long run.

Ulrike Roth
The University of Edinburgh

**Classics and Neo-Latin Literature**

What is nowadays called ‘Neo-Latin literature’ consists of the literature written in Latin in the early modern period, which is dominated by the Renaissance and Humanism movements. While scholars had neglected the Latin of this period for a long time, partly because of unfounded notions of its quality and partly due to the organization of research activity within academia, it is now a flourishing branch of interdisciplinary research, of which Classics is an important part.

That Classics has become attracted to Neo-Latin literature is in line with the growing interest in the reception of the classical world. Since students of Neo-Latin tend to be scattered over a variety of institutions and departments, it is particularly important for them to have a national representation and to come together for conferences and workshops.

Neo-Latin in the UK is represented by the Society for Neo-Latin Studies (https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/ren/snls/), which is a partner of the Institute of Classical Studies and affiliated with the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies.

The involvement of Classicists in research on Neo-Latin...
literature, besides colleagues from English, History, Modern Languages, and other related fields, is crucial. Latin philological expertise and grounding in classical literature is essential for the full understanding of these texts, most of which have not been translated and are typically based on imitation of classical authors. Scholars working largely on Neo-Latin literature also have a great deal to contribute to classical reception, since careful reading of Neo-Latin texts often reveals specific patterns of reception, such as the great importance of late-antique Christian Latin writers to early modern literature.

Working on Neo-Latin literature enables Classicists to engage in dialogue with students of other literatures, as well as historians and theologians, and to demonstrate particularly clearly to what extent literature in Latin is part of a country’s shared culture. Aspects of this feature were explored at a recent conference (held in Cambridge in September) on Neo-Latin Literary Perspectives on Britain and Ireland, 1520–1670. The papers showed how literary forms and motives taken over from classical Latin literature could be adapted to comment on the rapidly changing political, religious, and literary culture of early modern Britain.

Neo-Latin literature is an exciting field of research and a wonderful area for graduate students since one is able to work with original sources and there is so much unexplored material (a rarity in Classics) waiting to be edited, translated, and commented on. For instance, Victoria Moul (King’s College London) has recently been awarded a grant from the Leverhulme Trust to conduct a four-year research project on Latin poetry in English manuscript verse miscellanies, c. 1550–1700: a team of postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers led by Victoria Moul will gather, edit, and analyse hitherto unknown poetry from manuscripts and thus bring it to the attention of literary scholars, a worthwhile job for Classicists!

Euterpe’s Legacy

This project is designed to explore the ways in which the myth and history of the classical world have influenced the music of the modern world. It is primarily composed of a newly-established network of classicists, comparatists, and musicologists based at King’s College London: for example, Emily Pillinger is working on the role of the chorus for her new book Cracked Voices: Classical Myth and Classical Music after 1945; Miranda Stanyon is tackling a project on Andromache’s appearance in Romantic and Napoleonic-era Britain across opera, theatre, literature, visual and material culture; William Fitzgerald’s Leverhulme-funded project on ‘The Aesthetics of Neoclassicism’ includes the study of some of the most important early 20th-century composers.

We are also reaching out to other scholars nationally and internationally to share work and collaborate in areas of mutual interest. We are organising a works-in-progress seminar series at King’s in autumn 2017, and plan to hold a bigger conference in 2018. The project has a strong outreach component: partners so far include the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden and Glyndebourne Opera, where we are involved in presenting public workshops and lectures (e.g. on Fiona Shaw’s production of Britten’s Rape of Lucretia), and writing programme notes for relevant productions (most recently on Mozart’s La clemenza di Tito).

Emily Pillinger
King’s College London

Gesine Manuwald
President, Society for Neo-Latin Studies

Lucretia and Collatinus at Glyndebourne 2014

The Departure of Berenice, Glyndebourne 2017
Living at UCL

University College London (UCL) is pioneering an initiative in teaching and learning Latin as a living language! From the 28th - 29th June 2017 in the Department of Greek and Latin, Teaching Fellow Emily Chow-Kambitsch and undergraduate students Hansy Shore, Abhilash Sivaraman, and Caterina Domeneghini ran UCL’s first Living Latin Workshop. Supported by UCL ChangeMakers and UCL Greek and Latin, the workshop offered participants the chance to experience a range of approaches to Latin as a living language: participants wrote short stories, played cooperative games, and engaged in role-play exercises (see the image for the menu used in a ‘dining out’ activity) in Latin.

Activities that particularly illuminated uses of active Latin today included a presentation on Vicipaideia (the Latin Wikipedia); a listening exercise with Justin Slocum Bailey’s Quomodo Dicitur? Podcast; and a Latin Tweet challenge that showed the benefits of Latin’s conciseness when it comes to packing a wealth of information into a tweet!

The workshop attracted 20 participants, including academics, students, schoolteachers, and retirees just returning to Latin studies. Welcoming this diverse audience allowed us to have rich discussions about potentials for growth of immersive Latin initiatives in formal and informal pedagogical settings.

Two guest speakers graciously joined us. Dr. Pauline Souleau, a lecturer in French at the University of Oxford, shared the importance of active use methods in modern language teaching. A. Gratius Avitus, fluent Latin speaker and founder of the London Latin Circle, spoke for one hour, entirely in Latin, about current resources and organizations which teach and explore uses of active Latin.

The workshop received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Many participants described how the workshop transformed their ideas about ‘Living Latin’: ‘I have seen Latin in a new...light – I have been surprised by the number of applications it has to modern day life’. ‘I am much clearer on how this can be used in the classroom, & more confident about using such materials’. UCL’s Living Latin Workshop has yielded a new group for students and staff, meeting regularly in an informal setting and incorporating activities in the vein of those featured in the workshop. This group aims to aid its members in developing their language skills, and to contribute to the expanding potential for Living Latin to link scholars, students, and enthusiasts around the world.

For more information, contact the organizers at ucllivinglatin@gmail.com.

Emily Lord-Kambitsch
University College London

Conferences and meetings

The Pilgrimage of Hadrian’s Wall 2019

The 14th Pilgrimage will be held from the 20th to 28th July 2019. This event is organised by the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society and the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne. The Pilgrimage will be based in hotels in Newcastle and Carlisle.

Traditional sites will be visited, but the focus will be on new work in the field and in the study. Two primary themes will be the building of the Wall and its history in the third and fourth centuries. Priority will be given to bookings by members of the two societies, but the event will be open to all from the 1st July 2018. Further details will follow.

David J Breeze
Chairman of the Pilgrimage Committee
The Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, Serbia 2018

The next Congress will be held in Serbia from the 2nd to 10th September. The opening events will be held in Belgrade and then we will transfer to Viminacium for the remainder of the meeting. Tours will include visits to the Iron Gates and the remains of Trajan’s bridge with a short cruise on the Danube, Gamzigrad, Sirmium, Novi Sad, and Naissus. Details of the tours and the programme are available on the website: limes2018.org

David Breeze and Rebecca Jones

Those interested in preparing beforehand may wish to note that David Breeze's The Frontiers of Imperial Rome, has just been reprinted by Pen and Sword.

Being Everybody’s Slaves: Public Slavery in the Ancient and Modern World

An International Conference on Public Slavery held from 22nd to 24th March 2018 at Newcastle University.

The conference is bringing together some of the most prominent experts on ancient and modern slavery to discuss central methodological issues and focus on the interpretation of the concept of ‘public’ slavery. The aim is to provide a methodologically up-to-date discussion of the nature of public slavery, introducing for the first time a theoretical and comparative approach to public slavery, both in Rome and in the early modern and modern periods.

Speakers and discussants will include Jean-Jacques Aubert (Université de Neuchâtel), Andrea Binsfeld (University of Luxembourg), Anne Brogini (Université de Nice), Paulin Ismard (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne), Sandra Joshel (University of Washington), Franco Luciani (Newcastle University), Nida Nebahat Naçacı (Bilkent Üniversitesi), M’hamed Oualdi (Princeton University), Orlando Patterson (Harvard University), Nicholas Purcell (University of Oxford), Benedetta Rossi (University of Birmingham), Ulrike Roth (University of Edinburgh), Federico Santangelo (Newcastle University), Rebecca Schumway (College of Charleston), Ahmadou Séhou (Université de Maroua), Vijayalakshmi Teelock (University of Mauritius), Jane Webster (Newcastle University), Alexander Weiß (Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main).

For further information, please visit

The conference is part of the ‘Servi Publici: Everybody’s Slaves (SPES)’ project, which is carried out by Franco Luciani at Newcastle University and has received funding from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship (H2020-MSCA-IF-2015) under grant agreement No 704716.
This day-and-a-half conference aims to present the beginning of the work into the collections, display what the collection has in store for potential researchers, and investigate the context of Richborough in south-east Britain and across the English Channel.

This is a call for papers 20 minutes in length, with a section for shorter papers of 15 minutes.

Suggested topics for the sessions are:
- Cross Channel Connections
- The Saxon Shore
- Roman Kent
- Late Roman Britain
- Roman Military Objects
- Roman Invasion of Britain

If you are interested in submitting a paper then please let the organiser Philip Smither (pws7@kent.ac.uk) know.

Organisers: Philip Smither, Jo Grey, Kathryn Bedford.

*Maternitas in Classical Antiquity*

*Held at the British School at Rome, on Thursday 17th May 2018*

To celebrate the establishment of the Sheffield Centre for the Archaeology of Childhood a year ago, the British School at Rome will host ‘*Maternitas in Classical Antiquity*’ on 17th May 2018.

This conference aims to deepen our historical, archaeological, and anthropological understanding of maternity in the Greek, Roman, and Late Antique periods. Scholars from different disciplines will focus on the maternal body and the validation of women’s physical, social, and gendered experiences of childbearing in the Classical world. Papers explore themes such as conception and pregnancy, fertility and fertility-related cult practices, health risks to mother and baby, childbirth, and mother-infant relationships.

This event is free of charge, however if you would like to be included in the catering (tea/coffee, lunch, evening reception), there will be a cost of £22.50.

If you wish to attend the conference, please see the website for the programme and the registration and payment links:
https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/archaeology/events/maternitas

Places are limited. The maximum number of conference attendees is 40.

The conference is sponsored by the Department of Archaeology (University of Sheffield) and the Society for the Study of Childhood in the Past (SSCIP). Conference organiser is Maureen Carroll (p.m.carroll@sheffield.ac.uk).

**Exhibitions**

**Roman Silver on Show in Edinburgh**

*Until 25th February 2018, Daily from 10am–5pm (free entry)*

An exhibition at the National Museum in Edinburgh is showcasing new finds and the latest research on Roman silver in Scotland. Entitled *Scotland’s Early Silver*, it tells the story of the impact of imported Roman silver on local societies, and how it was transformed into Early Medieval power symbols.

Starting with the use of *denarius* hoards as political pay-offs in the late 2nd century AD, the exhibition then turns to *hacksilver* – Roman silver vessels converted to bullion and passed north in military payments and political pay-offs. As well as the latest research on the famous Traprain Treasure, the exhibition includes a new hoard from Dairsie in Fife. It is the first time that this 2015 discovery has been...
on public display. Dating to around AD 300, it pushes the Roman policy of hacksilver payments back by a century—this is the earliest evidence known from anywhere in “barbarian” Europe.

The rest of the display traces the legacy of this Roman hacksilver. There was no exploitation of local silver resources at this time, so Roman silver was the essential raw material for local status display. In contrast to the Germanic world, silver, not gold, was the status metal of choice; perhaps because it was an exotic new material with Roman associations, whereas gold had a long history in the north.

This Roman silver was transformed into huge neck chains, fine pins or ornate brooches, and so lived on for centuries, becoming increasingly diluted until the next influx of new metal from the Viking world around AD 800.


Members of the Roman Society can purchase the book accompanying the exhibition, Scotland’s Early Silver, for the special price of £14.99 (rrp £19.99) + £3.50 UK p/p.

Early Medieval Scotland is also available for £18.75 (rrp £25.00) + £3.50 UK p/p.

For overseas members the same offer applies plus the relevant postal rate. Offer ends 28 February 2018. To get the reduced prices visit https://shop.nms.ac.uk/ and put in the code Silver17. Alternatively, phone the publisher on 0131 247 4026, mentioning the code. (The offer is not available in the museum shop).
Frontier Fashion: Glass Bangles of the Roman North

Until 3rd January 2018 (free entry)

An exhibition in Newcastle at the Great North Museum: Hancock puts a peculiar type of artefact from Roman Britain under the spotlight: glass bangles. These seamless ring-shaped adornments were made of coloured glass. The exhibition examines the arrival of glass bangle technology in Britain, the popularity of these accessories in the frontier region of the province, and the various functions bangles may have had. Also on display are full-size reconstructions of the glass bangles, which were made in collaboration with National Glass Centre in Sunderland and glass artist Connor Garton. Of particular interest are 3D reconstructions of complete glass bangles based on two small fragments from Vindolanda Roman Fort and Corbridge Roman town. An engaging short film also reveals how to manufacture a seamless glass bracelet.

The exhibition is part of a project that has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 657309 in the framework Marie Sklodowska-Curie actions. More information about the project can be found at www.romanglassbangles.com

Projects

Roman and Late Antique Artefacts from Egypt: Understanding society and culture

This new two-year AHRC-funded research project began in June this year. It is led by Ellen Swift (University of Kent), with April Pudsey (Manchester Metropolitan University), and Jo Stoner (University of Kent). The project is the first in-depth study of Roman and Late Antique Egypt that uses everyday artefacts as its principal source of evidence. It aims to transform our understanding of social experience, social relations, and cultural interactions among the populations of Egypt in this period. UK museums hold significant collections of artefacts from Roman and Late Antique Egypt as a result of late 19th- and early 20th-century archaeological excavations, yet most of these objects have never been studied systematically from a social perspective. The project will study artefacts from the collection of UCL’s Petrie Museum in Bloomsbury, London: one of the largest and best-documented in the UK.

We will examine the artefact features, the materials they were made from, and evidence of modification that shows how they were used and re-used in daily life. In association with the study of papyrus texts, we will investigate aspects of social behaviour and experience that shed new light on daily life in Roman and Late Antique Egypt. We are particularly interested in investigating how experiences may have differed between children, adults, slaves, women, men, and people of different social and ethnic groups. Evidence of wear and repair will reveal both aspects of practical daily use, and personal and sentimental meanings that may have been attached to objects such as dress accessories, shoes, toys, and simple musical instruments.
Projects/Books

Our public exhibition at UCL’s Petrie museum towards the end of the project will present our research on the musical instruments in particular. Originals from the Petrie collection will be displayed with prototypes and replicas made using 3D scanning and printing technology. Visitors will be able to experience the sounds of the artefacts, handle and play the replica items, and learn how the artefacts would have been used to create particular experiences, for instance in religious and ritual activities.

We also have a blog if you’d like to keep up to date with our research: [http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/egypt-artefacts/blog/](http://blogs.kent.ac.uk/egypt-artefacts/blog/)

Ellen Swift (University of Kent)
April Pudsey (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Jo Stoner (University of Kent)

M. L. Sund is a historian of ancient Rome who now lives in the Eternal City. He wrote the epic during two years of travel and research in Europe and the Middle East.

Books


In the late Iron Age, Rome was a small collection of huts arranged over a few hills. By the 3rd century BC, it had become a large and powerful city, with monumental temples, public buildings, and grand houses. It had conquered the whole of Italy and was poised to establish an empire. But how did it accomplish this historic transformation?

This book explores the development of Rome during this period, and the nature of its control over Italy, considering why and how the Romans achieved this spectacular dominance. For Rome was only one of a number of emerging centres of power during this period. From its complex forms of government, to its innovative connections with other states, Kathryn Lomas shows what set Rome apart. Examining the context and impact of the city’s dominance, as well as the key political, social, and economic changes it engendered, this is crucial reading for anyone interested in Ancient Rome.


The Roman army enjoys an enviable reputation as an instrument of waging war, but as the modern world reminds us, an enduring victory requires far more than simply winning battles. When it came to suppressing insurgencies, or deterring the depredations of bandits,

**Venus Anh**

Society member M.L. Sund will have published by the year’s end the historical fiction “Venus Anh” in an epic poem. This tragic yet inspiring tale is set in ancient Rome and traces the life of a king’s daughter, confined to a childhood of slavery, who is chosen by a goddess to disseminate the *Tables of the Venus Anh*: a set of women’s rights and duties.

During early adulthood she is stabbed while speaking in the Roman Forum but resurrected at the Temple of Jupiter as the goddess of women’s rights. While continuing to spread her message, her lifelong dream of marrying Julius Caesar is thwarted when he is murdered a month before their wedding date.

**Scene from ‘Venus Anh’**

Complementary material is available at the website [venusanh.com](http://venusanh.com). The author has created images for all 55 scenes in the poem, which is the result of an ambitious photography project involving dozens of models at historic locations throughout Italy.

Costumes were designed by Chiara Ferrantini, an award-winning designer in Italy’s cinematic industry. The imagery will be published separately in 2018. Canadian author

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Ellen Swift
April Pudsey
Jo Stoner

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the army frequently deployed small groups of infantry and cavalry based in fortlets.

These remarkable installations have never previously been studied as a group and show a new side to the Roman army. Rather than displaying the broad uniformity that Roman military bases are famous for, individual fortlets were usually bespoke installations tailored to local needs. This study focuses on the rich archaeological datasets from north-west Europe, but draws on evidence for fortlet use from across the Empire.

Unlike forts and fortresses, which were necessary to accommodate and provision army units, fortlets were not an automatic by-product of conquest. Instead, they only seem to have been built where and when they were actively needed to counter local disruption. As such, they provide a barometer for the security situation on the fringes of, and deep within, occupied territory.

Analysis of fortlet design and distribution reveals stark differences, both regionally and more generally between Britain and Continental Europe, in the techniques employed by the military to consolidate control in the aftermath of conquest. Assessing the role of fortlets also helps explain the differing designs of the Empire’s most famous artificial frontier systems: Hadrian’s Wall, the Antonine Wall, and the Upper German and Raetian limites. The archaeological evidence is fully integrated with documentary sources, which disclose the gritty reality of life in a Roman fortlet.


At age 65, Nerva assumed the role of emperor of Rome; just 16 months later, his reign ended with his death. Nerva’s short reign robbed his regime of the opportunity for the emperor’s imperial image to be defined in building or monumental art, leaving seemingly little for the art historian or archaeologist to consider. In view of this paucity, studies of Nerva primarily focus on the historical circumstances governing his reign with respect to the few relevant literary sources. The Image of Political Power in the Reign of Nerva, AD 96-98, by contrast, takes the entire imperial coinage program issued by the mint of Rome to examine the “self-representation” and, by extension, the policies and ideals of Nerva's regime.

The brevity of Nerva’s reign and the problems of retrospection caused by privileging posthumous literary sources make coinage one of the only ways of reconstructing anything of his image and ideology as it was disseminated and developed at the end of the 1st century during the emperor’s lifetime. The iconography of this coinage, and the popularity and spread of different iconographic types – as determined by study of hoards and finds, and as targeted towards different ancient constituencies – offers a more positive take on a little-studied emperor.

Across three chapters, Elkins traces the different reverse types and how they would have resonated with their intended audiences, concluding with an examination of the parallels between text and coin iconography with previous and subsequent emperors. The Image of Political Power in the Reign of Nerva, AD 96-98 thus offers significant new perspectives on the agents behind the selection and formulation of iconography in the late 1st and early 2nd century, showing how coinage can act as a visual panegyric similar to contemporary laudatory texts by tapping into how the inner circle of Nerva’s regime wished the emperor to be seen.


Built around AD 122, Hadrian’s Wall was guarded by the Roman army for over three centuries and has left an indelible mark on the landscape of northern Britain. It was a wonder of the ancient world and is a World Heritage Site. Written by a leading archaeologist who has excavated widely on the Wall, this is an authoritative yet accessible treatment of the archaeological evidence. The book explains why the expansion of the Roman empire ground to a halt in remote northern Britain, how the Wall came to be built, and the purpose it was intended to serve. It is not a guidebook to the remains, but an introduction to the Wall and the soldiers and civilians, men, women and children, who once peopled the abandoned ruins visited by tourists today.
These two substantial excavations provide significant evidence to complement existing knowledge of Roman settlement in the Upper Thames Valley. Horcott Quarry, near Lechlade, produced a discontinuous sequence of activity stretching from the early Mesolithic to the Anglo-Saxon period. The finds from the earlier Iron Age, Roman, and Anglo-Saxon periods were particularly extensive, and comprised evidence for settlement and, in the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods, burials as well.

The Roman activity spanned the period from the beginning of the 2nd century to the end of the 4th century, although it was at a low level after c. AD 350. A system of ditched enclosures and droveways was associated with waterholes, crop-drying ovens, numerous pits, and a small stone building of unusual plan. A few burials dated c. AD 100-250 lay within the enclosure around the building, while a cemetery with 56 graves dating from c. AD 250-350 was established in a large enclosure to the east. A further isolated burial was situated both spatially and chronologically between the Roman cemetery and early Anglo-Saxon features to the north. Anglo-Saxon settlement included some 33 sunken-featured buildings and burials of two phases. The earlier burials, dated c. AD 400-550, comprised a small group of women and children, while three subadult burials were dated c. AD 600-700. Radiocarbon dates clarified the chronological relationships between the burial groups.

Arkells Land lies in an area with complex patterns of river channels close to well-known sites at Coln Gravel, Thornhill Farm, and Claydon Pike. Activity on a significant scale began in the later 1st century AD, but the most intensive occupation was in the middle Roman period. A trackway cut through earlier enclosures and was associated with a complex scheme of further ditched enclosures that evolved through the 2nd and 3rd centuries. A close association with sites such as Claydon Pike is very likely.

M.J. Dearne with G. Gillam and R. Dormer 2017 First Stop North of Londinium: the Archaeology of Roman Enfield and its Roadline Settlement Enfield Archaeology Society

This new Enfield Archaeological Society publication gives a comprehensive account and analysis of what is known of the Roman period in the most northerly borough of Greater London.

It includes scattered high-status burials and the first nucleated settlement on Ermine Street north of the capital, as well as a wider discussion of the nature and significance of roadline settlements around Londinium and their possible relationship to the cursus publicus.

The volume contains full excavation and finds reports for over 45 sites.

This publication is available from www.enfarchsoc.org.


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Mireille Corbier (corbier@msh-paris.fr), director of L’Année épigraphique, announces that L’Année épigraphique 2014 (containing 1661 entries, and 1000 pages, including 230 pages of index) was published in August 2017 and is now available.

Orders should be sent to Presses Universitaires de France at revues@puf.com.
This publication offers the first extensive study of the role of the family in the prose work of Seneca, taking as its starting point the principle that ancient philosophies see themselves as unified systems, in which everything has a place and everything intersects.

While interactions with other people through friendship and politics have received considerable attention, the important role that the family plays in our moral lives has thus far not been recognised. Yet Seneca’s work devotes much time to exploring the ways that Stoic philosophy shapes our relationship with our family members.

Gloyn examines our relationships with mothers, fathers, brothers and spouses, as well as considering Seneca’s view of the imperial family and his approach to these issues in the Epistulæ Morales, addressed to a more committed Stoic audience than his other works. Overall, she argues that the family serves a central role in our moral development – both our biological family and the family that we choose for ourselves.

Illustrated throughout with maps, plans, diagrams and other images, Pompeii: An Archaeological Guide offers a general introduction to the doomed city, followed by an authoritative summary and survey of the buildings, artefacts, and paintings themselves. The result is an unrivalled picture, derived from an intimate knowledge of Roman archaeology around the Bay of Naples, of the forum, temples, brothels, bath-houses, bakeries, gymnasia, amphitheatre, necropolis, and other site buildings – including perennial favourites like the House of the Faun, named after its celebrated dancing satyr.

London Archaeologist

London Archaeologist is celebrating 50 years as the only quarterly covering all the archaeology of London. A special 50-year review of each of five periods will be published in the five issues from January 2018, with Roman archaeology being surveyed by Peter Rowsome in the spring issue. A full day conference in the autumn will bring together leading lights in London’s archaeology, including Peter Marsden, who wrote the first article (on the Billingsgate Roman bath house) in the first issue of London Archaeologist in 1968.

For details of subscribing and the call for papers for the conference, please check the website: www.londonarchaeologist.org.uk

P. Wilkinson 2017 Pompeii: An Archaeological Guide

The resonant ruins of Pompeii are perhaps the most direct route back to the living, breathing world of the ancient Romans. Two million visitors annually now walk the paved streets that re-emerged, miraculously preserved, from their layers of volcanic ash.

Yet for all the fame and unique importance of the site, there is a surprising lack of a handy archaeological guide in English to reveal and explain its public spaces and private residences. This compact and user-friendly handbook, written by an expert in the field, helpfully fills that gap.
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