



The School Bulletin

BURROUGH HILL IRON AGE HILLFORT FIELDSCHOOL: A NEW RESEARCH AND TRAINING INITIATIVE

John Thomas & Jeremy Taylor report:

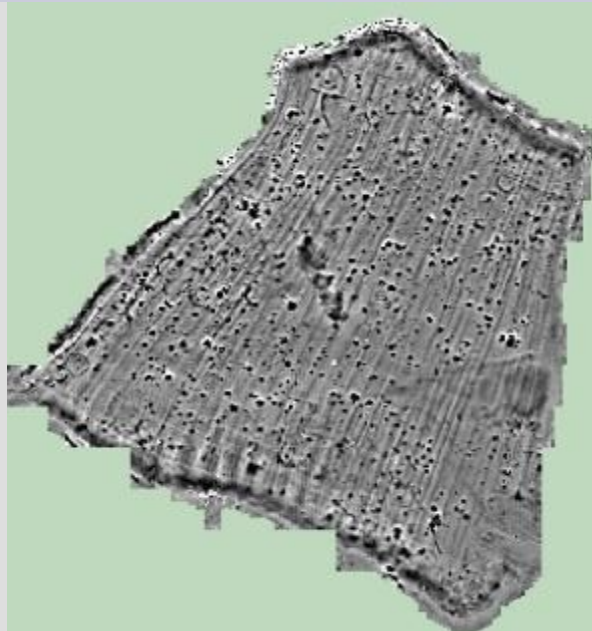
In June and July 2010 the School of Archaeology and Ancient History began a new student training excavation focused on the Iron Age hillfort at Burrough Hill, near Melton Mowbray in Leicestershire. Burrough Hill is the finest example of a large univallate (single banked) hillfort in Leicestershire and has protected status as a Scheduled Monument. The hillfort has attracted the attentions of antiquarians and archaeologists since the 16th century and there have been a number of small-scale excavations on the site over the years. Despite this the hillfort is poorly understood, with current interpretation based largely on the earlier observations.

Activity on Burrough Hill appears to have earlier Iron Age origins (c. 800-450 BC) but the exact chronology of the site's development is obscure. Finds from the monument and surrounding fields indicate a Mesolithic presence (c. 10,000-5,500 BC) through to the late Roman period (4th-5th centuries AD) although full-time occupation may have started during the Bronze Age or earlier Iron Age. After people stopped living at the hillfort, the interior and surrounding fields were farmed in the medieval period and were ploughed until the parish was enclosed in the 17th century. The hillfort was also used as a fairground and in the 19th century became the venue for steeple-chasing organised by the Melton Hunt.

The project is designed as a combined research and training programme: training for undergraduates and distance learning students, with School postgraduate support alongside staff, who are drawn from both the School and from the unit, ULAS, who can call upon wide expertise in the region's archaeology; and research-driven since Burrough Hill has scope to inform greatly on Iron Age settlement and populations in the Midlands and on transitions of such sites into the Roman period and beyond; work will cover not just the fort but the environs. The aim is for a five year project, with external funding, and links with specific US universities to allow their students to learn on a major British excavation.

Our preliminary work included a full geophysical survey of the hillfort interior. The impressive results show a spread of several hundred pits, boundaries and small enclosures, as well as a series of round-houses arranged around the edge of the interior in the lee of the ramparts. In addition, archive materials relating to previous excavations here are starting to be analysed.

The first trench, located to re-examine an earlier 1960 excavation of the hillfort entrance, revealed much about construction methods and the gradual development of the entrance. The rampart was made of a series of stone and clay layers, showing a sequence of expansion over time. The layers were held in place by well-built drystone walls. The northern wall also acted as one side of the entrance passage. Two deep post holes in this part of the trench would have held huge timber gates and supported a wooden walkway above the entrance. A recessed room was built into the rampart and may have acted as a guard chamber. Preserved here were intact Iron Age floors and hearth remains that will hopefully provide radiocarbon dates and vital environmental information. *(continued overleaf)*



The geophysical plot for the interior of Burrough Hill—a mass of activity from Iron Age to post-medieval times



Highlights in this issue:

School and ULAS news	3
The Distance Learning page	5
Australian tea drinking	8
Photo caption competition time	9
Pompeii babes tour 2010	10
PhDs out and about	14-15
Dear Deirdre	16



BURROUGH HILL 2010 EXCAVATION— Cont.

A range of pottery and animal bones were found in the entrance trench indicating mid-late Iron Age activity between the 4th-1st centuries BC. Pottery and bone, as well as metalworking and weaving tools were found in the 'guard room', hinting at some of the activities that took place within. A pit behind the ramparts also produced a bone pin, pottery and the bones of sheep, cattle and pig, showing some of the species the hillfort inhabitants kept and ate.

A second trench (see image on right) was positioned to examine a section of the rampart and immediate interior on the northern side of the hillfort. The archaeology was well-preserved because it lay beneath a medieval plough headland that had protected the underlying remains. The northern part of the trench, adjacent to the rampart earthworks, contained an extensive layer of rubble tumble which had accumulated as the hillfort gradually fell into disrepair. Pottery from within the rubble and associated layers will help to understand when this process began. Intriguingly, a refuse layer rich in Roman pottery indicated intermittent activity on Burrough Hill between the 1st and 4th centuries AD. The pottery was dominated by a range of drinking vessels so it may be that in the Roman period, the hillfort was used for festivities at certain times of the year – a prelude perhaps to the fairground and steeple-chasing of the early modern period!



Andy Hyam of ULAS investigates part of the roundhouse in Trench 2 at Burrough Hill. The rampart tumble layers can be seen on the background

Some sense of the Iron Age activity in this part of the hillfort was also revealed. A laid cobble surface was probably part of a track or yard. Nearby, part of a roundhouse also indicated occupation in the lee of the ramparts. A number of pits and an area of metalworking waste were probably associated with this house.

The student labour force was a fantastically relaxed and hard-working team and clearly appreciated the outdoor activities—even if there were a few damp days to get in the way. Nonetheless, the excitement of digging a late iron Age site and discovering related finds and Roman materials was clear to be seen. There is plenty of work for the coming years of

study and our research questions and targets will be refined each season. The work of course continues between the actual digging seasons, with finds and environmental processing. Keep an eye on the School's webpages for a dedicated website offering further results, details and images of the work thus far and for plans for the 2011 season. And we look forward to seeing and working with a new group of students on the 2011 fieldschool!

Photo: Students busy planning and excavating the rampart facing wall and core layers. The drystone wall of the entrance passage is exposed in the foreground and in the middle distance the clay layers are being examined. And the sun was shining too!





NEWS FROM THE SCHOOL AND ULAS

By Colin Haselgrove & Patrick Clay

Another very busy year at the School! Our new BA in Archaeology by

Distance Learning is proving very popular, as are the MAs in the Classical Mediterranean and Historical Archaeology. The little matter of the Icelandic volcano proved a bit of a challenge, coinciding as it did with study weeks on both MAs, but everyone responded magnificently. The hastily rearranged Study Tour to Athens, Leicestershire, was adjudged as great a success as the one for those students whose flights managed to get them to Greece!

An excellent seminar programme this year was further enhanced by the new 'cake challenge,' which gives the speaker a chance to eat their words (deliciously) before they talk. Julia Farley, who had a leading role in the new format, was fittingly rewarded with a prestigious ARHC/ESRC Scholarship, enabling her to spend this autumn studying at the Library of Congress, Washington. We've also been delighted to host two major public talks—by Kevin Leahy on the Staffordshire hoard, and by historian Michael Wood on his Kibworth project (a recent major BBC TV series).

The new research-led field school at Burrough Hill got off to a successful start, with over 400 people (including three Pro-Vice-Chancellors) taking advantage of the open day to see the excavations. We look forward to the development of the project over the next few years to rival one of our rival's (Reading) long running excavation at Silchester. Among the research meetings hosted by School during the year was a joint conference with Nottingham on Mediterranean Identities and the Historical Archaeology post-graduate seminar. Among the Leicester Archaeology Monographs published this year were the proceedings of two previous seminars organised by our postgraduates, *In Search of the Iron Age*, and *Debating Urbanism* (see p.9 below). On a very sad but related note, Alan McWhirr, who founded the Monograph series, died in April. Alan was centrally involved in many of the School's success stories, notably in building up our distance-learning programme (in recognition of which we are instituting an annual prize for the best DL performance) and in the development of the thriving research-led unit of ULAS. Our deepest condolences to his wife, Helen. We all miss Alan greatly and it was excellent to see such a large crowd at a very fitting and warm set of tributes in a set of memorial talks organised by Marilyn Palmer on Saturday 23rd October.

Among new arrivals we welcome Naoise MacSweeney, who will be teaching Ancient History in place of Elly Cowan who left us in June to take up a lectureship at Sydney. Naoise comes to us from Cambridge, where, having completed her PhD on early Anatolia, she has been researching Greek colonisation. Stefan Krmnicek and Sara Strack have also joined the staff as Research Associates on the *Tracing Networks* project — see p.4 for the Networks' Research Associates. We are also delighted to welcome back Gillian Ramsey as Teaching Fellow in Ancient History for another year, but will soon be saying farewell to Chris King, who is going to Nottingham in the New Year as a lecturer. In October, Chris began a new College project on South Asian cultural heritage and places of worship, which we very much hope to see continue after his departure. Our congratulations to Chris on his success, along with Rachel Marriott who married Pete Godfrey in September (see picture, top right); Jeremy Taylor and his wife Melanie on the birth of their daughter, Matilda; Dan Stewart and Jen Baird (former PhD student and Research Fellow here) on their daughter, Laurel; current NERC PhD student, Kate Parks and husband Stephen on the birth of William; and Marc vander Linden and his wife Tamsin O'Connell (Dept of Archaeology, Cambridge University) on the birth of Charly.

As ever, there is too little space to list the many achievements of staff and students over the last year, including a spate of doctorates (and the first ever by DL), but I know the School would want to congratulate Simon James on the award of a Leverhulme Research Fellowship for 2011-12 and for his part in the success of a Leicester team led by Jo Story in Historical Studies in bringing a second Leverhulme Programme Grant to the University in three years. We have two thriving Joint Honours degrees with History and *The Impact of Diasporas in the Making of Britain* will provide an opportunity to develop new research links with all the participating departments, which also include Genetics and English. Congratulations also to Mark Gillings on his promotion to a Readership, and to Richard Thomas and Ruth Young on their Senior Lectureships; and to Marijke van der Veen on the award of a Fellowship for 2011-12 by the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies.

ULAS, despite the slow haul out of recession, actually undertook the highest number of projects over the last year since 2006, even if mostly at the 'initiation' stage – desk-assessments, surveys and evaluations. A major highlight was Richard Buckley's negotiation with English Heritage to enable access for the new fieldschool at Burrough Hill which involved several ULAS staff (see pp.1-2 of this *Bulletin*). Following the publication of the very well received Hemington Bridges monograph, three more are now at final edits stage, while five papers by ULAS staff have just been published in latest *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. During 2009-10 ULAS provided over 70 outreach events including talks, open days, School visits and 20 week-long work experience placements. This included July's 2010 Festival of Archaeology where staff provided several talks, guided tours and handling sessions at local museums. Meanwhile, many congratulations to Gavin and Lesley Speed on the birth of Henry Noah on 30th June; and in September we welcomed back Liz Johnson following maternity leave.

A last comment needs of course to go to the current upheavals in Higher Education: while at the time of writing it is too early to predict the combined effects of the Browne Report, the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review and increased government micro-management of HE on universities in general and the School especially, the consequences are clearly going to be far-reaching and it seems likely that the hard-won extra funding that Archaeology has received to support field and laboratory teaching will now disappear. This is a particular absurdity, when these are precisely the areas of learning that give our graduates the extra transferable skills and scientific understanding that employers in all walks of life will be looking for in the 21st century. This is a message that we must continue to fight to get across!





TRACING NETWORKS: MEET 'THE FABULOUS FOUR'

Having reported in the last *Bulletin* (front page news, no less!) about the goals and start of the Leverhulme Trust-funded, multi-pronged research programme entitled *Tracing Networks*, in this issue we can announce that the *Tracing Networks* team is now complete, having seen the addition of four research associates to the School of Archaeology & Ancient History at Leicester for four years. Their main job is research-oriented, but they will all be involved in teaching on various undergraduate and postgraduate modules. Below we introduce them and their ranges of expertise:

Stefan Krmnicek works with Colin Haselgrove on the project '*Mint condition: coinage and the development of technological, economic and social networks in the Mediterranean*'. He is currently particularly interested in the form and functions of money and coinage as economic, social and/or ritual media in the Greco-Roman world and beyond. Stefan studied Classical Archaeology and Numismatics in Vienna, Padua, Frankfurt and Cambridge and received a PhD from Frankfurt in 2009. He worked as research associate at the Institute of Archaeological Sciences in Frankfurt prior to coming to Leicester. As a keen football player, you might see him as part of School of Archaeology and Ancient History's soccer team – ever on the winning side, we hope! (though he will not play in the illustrated outfit...)



Alessandro Quercia supports Lin Foxhall with her project '*Weaving relationships: loom weights and cross-cultural networks in the ancient Mediterranean*'. Alessandro read Classical Archaeology at the University of Turin, Lecce and Milan and got a permanent position as an officer in the Superintendenza of Archaeological Heritage of Piedmont (NW Italy) and the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities in 2010. The main topic of Alessandro's research is the study and analysis of the Hellenistic and Roman coarse wares of the Mediterranean area, particularly aspects concerning their productions, functions and distribution. He is involved in teaching the second-year module 'The Mediterranean in the Ancient World'.



Sara Strack works with Ian Whitbread on the project '*Plain cooking: ceramics, networks of technological transfer and social change, from the late bronze age to the iron age in the Greek world*'. Sara studied Classical Archaeology, European prehistory, Greek philology and philosophy at the Universities of Heidelberg and Göttingen before moving to Edinburgh for her MSc and PhD. Sara's research interests centre on the study of every-day life in the human past, encompassing household archaeology, the archaeology of food and the organization of craft production. She is also interested in the impact of social, economic and political change on the life within small communities. Ceramics are of particular interest to her and for the Tracing networks project she investigates technological traditions in the production of coarse wares in the Aegean of the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age.



Melissa Vettters is Ann Brysbaert's research associate on '*Cross-Craft Interaction in the cross-cultural context of the late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean*'. She focuses on identifying areas of craft production in Late Bronze Age Tiryns, where exchange of techniques and materials across a range of crafts stimulated innovation. Melissa studied European Prehistory, Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology at Heidelberg and has worked as a research assistant for the Tiryns project of the German Archaeological Institute before taking up her job in the Tracing Networks project. Melissa's interests lie in approaches to ritual, social complexity in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean and ancient technology. She is permanently based in Athens, but teaches some of Leicester's distance learning students – such as on last Easter's Classical Mediterranean MA field-visit to the city.



STOP PRESS: Congratulations to Sara on the birth of her second child, Thomas!!!



THE DISTANCE LEARNING NEWS PAGE

A 2010 update from Dr Mark Pluciennik

At last! After many years of requests from our existing distance learning students, in 2010 we were finally able to start rolling out our 'Level 3' modules. Which means, beyond the jargon, that it is now possible to study for an entire Bachelor of Arts degree in Archaeology by distance learning. As far as we know, this is the first time that an archaeology degree is available in this way from a leading institution. It may have taken us a long time to get there - we first offered our Certificate in Archaeology (at Level 1) in 2001 - but early indications are that the wait has been worthwhile.

One of the problems in offering archaeology as a distance learning course is that parts of the discipline are practical and also involve teamwork. Thus both hand-on experience and face-to-face presence can be advantages in many ways - not only so that students have the opportunity to learn by doing and seeing, as well as by reading, writing and thinking, but also have the opportunity to quiz tutors and discuss matters with staff and their peers. Our distance learning students at Level 2 (Diploma) are already required to undertake a brief approved field experience, whether with us or with someone else, but we needed to do much more for students who would be studying for a full degree.

One of the things we do for Level 3 is to ask our students to do more fieldwork over the whole time they are studying with us - just as we do for full-time and campus-based students. So our distance-learning students too have to complete six weeks of fieldwork or similar archaeological experience before they can graduate. But we have also introduced an element which involves a short but intensive time at Leicester: Archaeological Practice.

In May this year our first nine DL BA students attended a laboratory-based week which forms part of the new module, and took part in sessions dealing with handling, recording and analysing archaeological data. The five day-long sessions looked at the analysis of lithics, pottery, human and animal bones (see top image), and at data presentation. Academics and professional archaeologists from ULAS, our contracting arm, also talked about how archaeological data have been analysed and interpreted in their own projects.

The students told us that they all enjoyed the week. It gave them the chance to gain new skills and work directly with archaeological materials, and also enabled them to meet other students and staff in person. And we can honestly say that we also enjoyed the opportunity to teach such a dedicated and self-motivated group of students. Distance Learning has many advantages and benefits, but it can be a lonely experience at times; as Alastair Thomson (from Wiltshire in the UK) said: "Distance Learning is remote from the institution, so after studying for four or five years it is good to meet students, the Distance Learning staff, and lecturers". Peter Heyes, based in Sarawak, said that "the week had been extremely worthwhile" and Anita Cornwell (Bradford, UK) summed up the week by saying: "it was very hard work but well worth it". We're now offering the experience to a larger group of students from 2011.

We're also seeing more of our students in other parts of Distance Learning too! Two of our MA programmes, in *Historical Archaeology*, and in *The Classical Mediterranean*, also involve field study trips as part of modules: one

in the English Midlands, the other in Athens, and both lasting for a week. Students on these may be campus-based or distance learners, and the mix works well for both sets, who may often have quite different backgrounds and experiences to offer and bring to the study material. In addition, we now have distance learning and campus-based students from all levels mixing on research projects: this year including Burrough Hill in Leicestershire and the Torcicoda Project in Sicily. All of these are examples of the School's commitment to integration, which we hope means that however people study, we will do our best to ensure that their experience is just as valuable and worthwhile. And even if student circumstances change, we want to make it possible to them all to continue studying with us, and being - and feeling - part of the School and the University of Leicester.



MA Historical Archaeology students enjoying the sights of Gas Street Basin in Birmingham on their Midlands fieldschool



ULAS 2009-10 Fieldwork in Leicester and the County

Despite the economic downturn several important new discoveries have been made by ULAS over the past year including further evidence of lower Palaeolithic activity associated with the Bytham river at Brooksby, Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement at Rothley, Iron Age settlements sites at Earl Shilton, Humberstone, Castle Donington and Northampton and a Roman – Anglo-Saxon burial site in Leicester:

Neolithic settlement evidence has been elusive in the mid-lands and a major discovery of a settlement associated with Grooved ware was made at Rothley, north of Leicester in 2005. An excavation in early 2010 again in Rothley has revealed similar evidence with a roundhouse of possible Neolithic or Bronze Age date. While C14 dates are awaited, this is an exciting discovery.

Iron Age settlements have been located at several locations with, of particular note, another part of the extensive occupation at Humberstone which now covers over 8 hectares.

At Southgate Street, Leicester an excavation close to the Roman and medieval defences located a 1st- or early 2nd-century substantial timber building with a number of tile- and granite-built hearth or oven bases set in an external yard. The building was subsequently demolished and apparently sealed by a series of clay and earth dumps likely forming the tail of and/or wash off the late 2nd century Roman defensive rampart. A substantial wall, constructed on the same alignment as the timber structure and defences, was traced along the northern excavation edge and appears to represent a masonry building constructed at the base of the rampart.

Over 30 late Roman and possible Anglo-Saxon burials have been located when they were exposed by ground-works for proposed student accommodation. Of these 15 were excavated before they sustained further damage. These were buried on north to south and east to west alignments, the east to west ones being typically later, and all appeared to date to the late 3rd or 4th century AD. Grave goods were recovered from a number of them including three buried with hobnail shoes and two with ceramic vessels. One individual had been buried with an enamelled copper alloy seal-box whilst one infant burial contained a shale bangle and a jet and glass bead necklace. An initial sample analysed consists of seven possible males, two possible females, and five children. A variety of different pathological conditions are present, including possible brucellosis (rare in archaeological samples and often confused with tuberculosis), pulmonary tuberculosis and tuberculosis meningitis.

Several important ULAS publications have included *The Hemington Bridges* monograph by Lynden Cooper and Susan Ripper. This reports on the excavation of three bridges, dating between the 11th and 13th century, across a former course of the Trent and has added to our knowledge of bridge-building and woodworking techniques, timber management and use, river hydrology and transport within the context of the medieval economy.

Patrick Clay

Photos: Top right— ULAS supervisors Roger and Tim working on the Roman levels at Bosworth House, Southgates St, Leicester.

Opposite— Roman seal box and rivet placed with burial at Western Road, Leicester. Re-used Roman seal boxes are known from Anglo-Saxon burials.





Crops, bites, lamps and hypocausts: the Cesenatico 2010 season

Neil Christie reports: This September saw the third season of excavation in the fields of Ca' Bufalini in Cesenatico, near Rimini up in north-east Italy (and near the sea, as well as some rather good fish restaurants and pizzerias, and ice cream parlours, and a few fine archaeological sites like Ravenna of course). Overseen by local lad and Leicester PhD student Denis Sami (recently elevated to Dr status – well done, sir!), whose parents very kindly provided meals for all, plus space for staff (the students were camping, although various mosquitoes thought they were sharing the tents with them, especially poor Hafs whose bitten limbs were the talk of the town), the digging was again highly productive – if again leading to as many questions as answers – and with finds aplenty (though no human skelies this year). The dig also again featured an accompanying Archeocamp, with about 85 local school children (in groups, not all at once!) out to learn about their local archaeology, to study finds, to scramble over spoilheaps and to throw stones or chunks of amphorae for the mad local dog Terry to chase.

Three trenches were opened up again (two led by ULAS supervisors), although this year we had the 'bonus' of the field high with a sorghum crop – nice in terms of providing a bit of shade and some rustling noises, but meaning the trench teams could not see each other and it took longer to meet up for the breaks! The crop was handy for the trench set over the line of the part ploughed out Roman road, since the reduced moisture over the road line meant the road's course was neatly highlighted by the lower and lighter plants! Emma and Josephine were the two students on this trench, each rather enjoying the plentiful finds of pot, amphorae, tile, glass, occasional coins, iron blobs; some pots were fractured but near complete, although top prize went to Pauline Carroll's recovery of a near intact third-century AD oil lamp with dancing figure design (see splendid image to right)!

In the two other trenches there was first the exciting discovery of part of a hypocaust, although here, as across many of the trenches so far dug at Cesenatico, the brick walls of the farm or villa had been largely robbed out; and the other trench contained a likely well, but also much large and distinctive brick work, but few domestic finds, suggesting a store building hereabouts. Student Mark rapidly became a pro at planning amongst the brick debris!



All of the trenches briefly turned into paddling pools and then mud heaps for a day or two near the end after unwanted heavy rainfall. Pre-dig rain had also scuppered plans to dig in a normally near-dried-out pond area with traces of a Roman colonnade. Terry the dog seemed to spend a lot of the time splashing in the revived pond thanks to Hafs! The site sequence overall seems to span the first to sixth centuries AD, with the road appearing from the fourth century when much robbing of the site overall took place; but was the site a single villa, did it grow from a set of smaller, earlier farms, and what caused the end of activity here? Time to ponder with another glass of local wine, we reckoned....

Top image: road cleaning in progress

Left: Terry the dog oversees spoil heap manoeuvres by the Archeocamp students





Kinchega Archaeological Research Project: tea-drinking in the Australian outback

The Kinchega Archaeological Research Project, directed by **Pim Allison**, has been surveying and excavated the Old Kinchega Homestead in western New South Wales, Australia. This project has been investigating the household practices of the families who occupied this outback homestead between 1870 and 1950. It has also carried out interviews with former inhabitants and their descendants and re-researched the records kept by the Kinchega Pastoral Estate, which, at its peak, ran over a million sheep. This homestead was not occupied by the owners of this estate, though, who lived in Adelaide, South Australia; it provided a home for the managers and overseers of this vast station and for their families. Investigating the archaeological remains of this homestead gives insights, in particular, into the lives of women and children in this remote rural environment.



This past summer (or rather this Australian winter) post-excavation artefact recording turned up some interesting discoveries. Students from the Australian National University (Canberra) volunteered to help sort all the ceramics, excavated from the homestead and collected from the homestead rubbish tip, into their various types of fabric and decoration – in total some 2000 pottery sherds. We found that the occupants of this homestead, over a span of some eighty years, had had at least five different, and extensive, dinner sets, often of quite fine quality.

We also found up to ten different toy teasets, some of the fragments of which were found under the verandahs around the homestead. Each of the families who lived in the homestead had at least one small daughter. These toy teasets provide insights into the play activities of these children and the socialising processes for young children living on the banks of the Darling River and surrounded by the Australian bush, and sheep.

Perhaps more important was the discovery that about 75% of the ceramic fragments that we studied were from white porcelain teacups and saucers, many with gilded lines and many of fine bone china. While such teasets are ubiquitous in contemporary urban sites, it is hard to envisage the, mainly male, workers at the homestead or on this pastoral estate drinking tea from these porcelain teasets. Rather they would appear to highlight the concern of the women here for tea-drinking in a refined manner of the 'genteel performance' that was an important concern for Australian women in the late Victorian period. But why so many teasets in this world dominated by men and sheep? The most probable answer is that the women on these remote sheep stations were visiting each other and holding women's meetings.

In 1922 the Australian Country Women's Association began in Sydney and was soon affiliated with the similar movement internationally. The CWA usually met in the local towns. However, as part of the research carried out this summer, we studied the book-keeping records and found that the Kinchega Pastoral Estate was buying gilded white porcelain teacups and saucers – by the dozen and by the half a dozen – on a regular basis from at least 1910. So the women from the nearby stations seem have been meeting together at the Kinchega homestead before the establishment of the CWA. But how did they get there, given that the nearest station to Kinch-



Tania Brown, student from the Australian National University collecting glass and ceramic artefacts from the Old Kinchega Homestead rubbish dump.

ega was 60km away? These simple white porcelain fragments are helping us to piece together something of the social networks, across considerable distances at a time when travel was not easy, and in a space where European women were sparse and their activities are seldom recorded in the pastoral histories. More work is planned on investigating the documentary records for such social networks.





NEW SCHOOL MONOGRAPHS

Two new titles have been added to the now well established and highly respected Leicester Archaeology Monograph series: most recent (volume 17) is *Debating Urbanism*, edited by Denis Sami and Gavin Speed, and bringing together an excellent set of papers from a very successful day conference held at Leicester in November 2008. Contributors explore changes to towns and their monuments and populations between the late Roman and early medieval periods, drawing on case studies from Britain to Spain, Italy, Sicily, Dacia, and the Eastern Mediterranean, and with themes ranging from town walls to urban waste management, and from changing beliefs to changed perceptions of 'decline'. Most contributors are, like the editors, PhD or post-doctoral students, thus showing how much

fresh work is going on in the field of late antique archaeology. The volume also features section introductions by established names in the field, such as Simon Esmonde-Cleary, John Moreland and Gareth Sears, and with an end piece by Martin Carver, editor of *Antiquity*.

Monograph no. 18 is *In Search of the Iron Age* edited by Martin Sterry, Andy Tullett and Nick Ray, which forms the proceedings of the very well attended Iron Age Research Student Seminar, also held in Leicester in 2008. This volume contains papers by PhD students from across Britain as well as by ULAS staff, and covers themes such as aggregated and enclosed settlements in the East Midlands, the Hallaton hoard, warfare and violence, the treatment of human bones in Atlantic Scotland, communities, identifying bovine tuberculosis, plus new work on burial sites in Flanders using C14 dating.

Please see the School webpages for details of prices for these and earlier volumes: www2.le.ac.uk/departments/archaeology/research/monographs

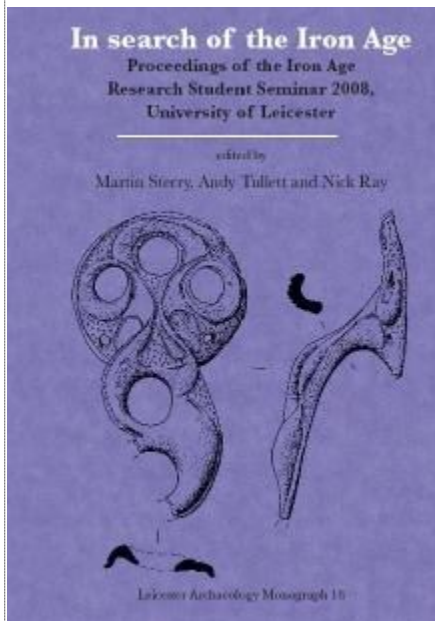
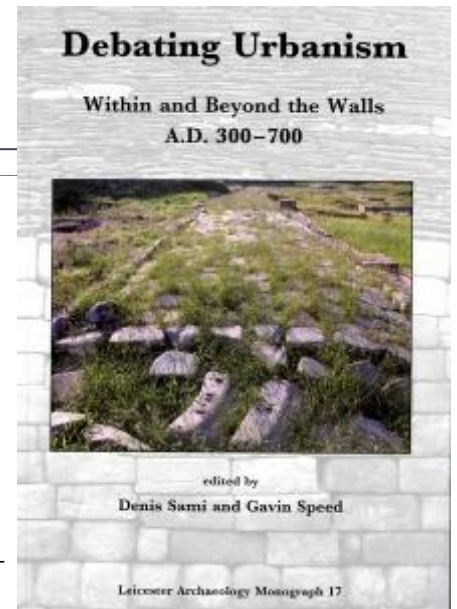
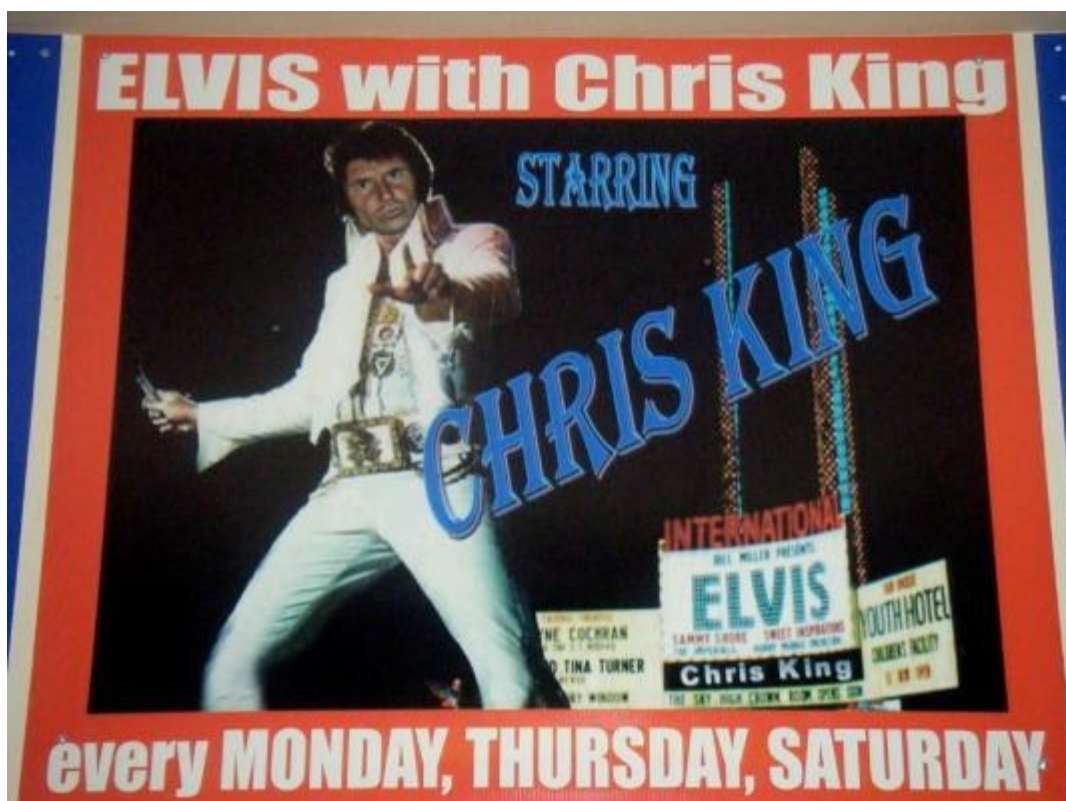


PHOTO CAPTION COMPETITION!

Thanks to Mike Hawkes for spotting one of our research staff's spare time fund-raising activities. Nice belt buckle there, lad. Is this what helped get that new job at Nottingham???

Ideas for suited captions on an e-card to the editor, please! Also, we request that entrants attach a £10 note for further administrative and additional tea-break purposes... paper clips are expensive, you know!





In Search of Venezuelan Colonial Pasts

Dr Alasdair Brooks reports on his fieldwork in 2010:

This July and August, I undertook field research with my Venezuelan colleague Ana Cristina Rodríguez Yilo for a British Academy small grant-funded project on 19th-century British ceramics in Venezuela. This is a pilot study to look at the feasibility of a longer-term project on the role of British-made material culture in 19th-century South America, using Venezuela as a case study.

The importance of South America for global comparative studies of 19th-century British goods – particularly ceramics – originally came to me when, paradoxically enough, I was working in Australia and writing my 2005 book *An Archaeological Guide to British Ceramics in Australia*. In the course of research for that book, I collated export figures that demonstrated that, by the middle of the 19th century, South America was the second-largest market for British ceramics exports – behind only the United States, and ahead of all of the overseas British Empire put together. I had clearly previously vastly underrated South America's importance in the global ceramics trade. In 2007, I was separately approached by Ana Cristina for advice on identifying some ceramics she had recovered during a 2004 excavation in the colonial centre of the (slightly confusingly-named) Venezuelan city of Barcelona. From this initial exchange of information grew a more detailed research collaboration, which eventually found me flying to Caracas this past July.

The specific focus of the work was an assemblage excavated in 2004 – a late 18th- to 19th-century rubbish dump on a domestic site associated with a local elite family in the centre of Barcelona, which is also the capital of Anzoátegui state. The Monagas family, who owned the house, were one of the most prominent families in 19th-century Venezuela, supplying two presidents – though neither José Tadeo Monagas or his brother José Gregorio Monagas are believed to have lived in Barcelona's Casa Monagas. Over 30,000 fragments of refined ceramics came from the site, so we knew there was no shortage of materials to work with – though while an initial catalogue had been filed with the municipal government, considerable work was still necessary in the field. Our work on the assemblage was intended to be one of the first attempts to place a 19th-century South American ceramics assemblage in its broad international context. Our specific goals were to:

- 1) Further quantify the 19th-century component of the assemblage using standard international methodologies.
- 2) Identify the percentage of British materials in the 19th century here to test the hypothesis that British imports dominate elite Venezuelan assemblages in the post-colonial period as British merchants expand into the South American market after the collapse of the Spanish colonial trade monopoly.
- 3) Identify the relative quantity of different decorative techniques in the assemblage to see how Venezuela fits into the past observation that British Empire assemblages favour brightly coloured decorations while US-based assemblages favour lightly decorated vessels.
- 4) Identify the relative quantity of different forms in order to see if these show any specifically Venezuelan preferences, or mirror distributions from the primary English-speaking regions identified above.

Our five weeks of work were highly successful. We focused on just the largest context from the site, a 19th-century rubbish pit. While this also contained thousands of small fragments of scattered ceramics debris, much presumably from fill, the core was a household clearance assemblage of hundreds of tightly-dateable vessels, many complete or substantially complete. These clearance materials could be sorted into clearly-definable sets of different decorative techniques, and the overwhelming majority of the marked fragments in the household clearance materials featured precisely the same maker's mark: DAVENPORT (a prominent 19th-century Staffordshire ceramics firm), the characteristic impressed anchor mark of that firm, and an impressed '36' above the anchor – indicating a manufacture date of 1836. So I couldn't have asked for a better assemblage to test the research questions!

We conclusively demonstrated that – at least at the elite level – British table ceramics almost totally replace Spanish table ceramics within Venezuelan households within 20 years of effective independence (in 1820; the initial formal declaration was in 1811). Other than one Chinese porcelain plate, all of the table ceramics in the assemblage were British. The more fragmented fill items from later in the 19th century were slightly more complex in that they included some French and German vessels. There was not much evidence of utilitarian kitchen and storage ceramics vessels in the assemblage we studied – they



Photo : Alasdair at the ruined colonial basilica of San Lorenzo, offering some sherds for public consumption

comprised around 10% – but preliminary evidence suggests that these remained in a more local / Hispanic tradition.

The household clearance assemblage is much closer to what would be found on an 1830s assemblage in the United States rather than on a British or Australian site. The types of hand-painted, edge-decorated, and transfer-printed styles are entirely consistent with an American assemblage of the same date; in many cases these decorations are almost entirely absent from their British and Australian equivalents. We also found evidence of uniquely Venezuelan traits within the assemblage, showing a preference for trade in plainer vessels with France and Germany. There were some good signs that French ceramics here were tied to trade in olive oil and wine: a brief study showed that there were marked French bottles reading 'huile d'olive' and 'St. Julien' (the Monagas family seem to have had reasonably expensive tastes when it came to claret!), with the latter indicating the potential for a broader trade with the Bordeaux region.

Another major point of difference came from the absence of a decoration. The extremely common Asiatic Pheasants transfer print pattern, one of the most ubiquitous transfer prints globally, and familiar to archaeologists working on the 19th century in North America, Britain, Australia, and quite a few other parts of the world, was wholly absent from any of the Venezuelan sites we looked at. In fact, I had taken along modern examples of the Asiatic Pheasants pattern (one Stoke factory still produces the pattern today) as gifts to give to colleagues in Venezuela – only to find out afterwards that this incredibly common pattern doesn't seem to have ever been found here! In any case, there are lots of points worth following up here as this fascinating and important research develops.

Next step: more funding and more fieldwork!



Under the Volcano in the Windy City

By Deirdre O'Sullivan

Unlike many locked out of the UK by the Icelandic volcano eruption in April, I was fortunate enough to get caught in a happening place. En route from the SAA (Society for American Archaeology) conference in St Louis, my return journey ended at O'Hare – a nightmare airport next to a great destination.

The home of the blues, the elevator and, allegedly, the best steaks in the US, Chicago is justifiably proud of its heritage of imposing architecture. Monumental skyscrapers line the banks of the Chicago River, best appreciated on a great boat tour. These are ambitious and luxurious buildings, which symbolised the power and absorbed the wealth of the city's founding fathers and famous institutions.

Chicago is a top city! The underground (the L) runs overground and makes a great clanking rattle, always reassuring to the nervous city dweller. A brisk wind from the lake keeps downtown pedestrians wide awake for shopping opportunities. Cultural attractions include the posh Art Institute of Chicago where you can easily ignore the paintings and just admire the building, and the more conservative Field Museum, home to a cast of thousands of endangered species, grouped into complex panoramic dioramas (all duly exterminated and stuffed, of course!).

What Chicago is also really famous for is gangsters, but there seemed little realisation of the heritage potential here. A keen fan of Sara Paretsky's top PI, V. I. Warshawski, I had hoped that the notorious criminal world that survives in her pages might be vicariously encountered on some heritage trail; but it was not to be. There is some fringe marketing – the Cole Hahn store was offering a nice line in retro 20s footwear that included spats! However, I saw no blue plaques on the pavements for local celebrities such as Al Capone, who lived with his wife and mother in a Chicago suburb, or events like the St Valentine's Day massacre, familiar to all from *Some Like it Hot*.

You can nonetheless experience some of the scary qualities of the Prohibition era - just head for the underground car parks. I did this inadvertently, exiting the L below street level into what I had thought would prove to be a regular downtown station. Er, no... cars, (yes, ok) but also a cold, rusty smell, darkness, silence, nobody (where had all of my fellow passengers gone?) no 'way out' signs, and then, possibly somebody, lurking behind a concrete pillar. I have lived to tell the tale – say no more.



The Officer's Club or 'Social Hall' on Alcatraz. It is now a roofless ruin; the island is being developed as a nature reserve and garden as well as a heritage site.

Adventitiously, I had an opportunity to pick up on gangster heritage later in the year, when Delight Stone's PhD (by distance learning) viva in November took me to San Francisco. The famous prison on the nearby island of Alcatraz has been developed by the National Parks Service as a heritage attraction; many of the buildings have become ruinous (see photo above) but there is an excellent audio tour of the cell block complex, where Capone, 'Machine Gun' Kelly (apparently a charming man) and other desperadoes took significant career breaks. On the register admitting him, Al gave his profession as 'hoodlum'. Hmm... Not one usually listed in Career Service advice!

Hoodlum heritage must be out there elsewhere – perhaps I was just looking in the wrong places. Maybe a heritage car park theme could be developed... remember where you read it first!

Left: Deirdre with (centre) Delight Stone and (left) her external examiner, Dr David Brauner of Oregon State University. Delight's successful thesis was on 'Culture Contact and Gender in the Hudson's Bay Company of the Lower Colombia River'.



Diwali: Lights, music and ladies!

To celebrate Diwali, the festival of Light, the School's Distance Learning Unit (with the office duly lit up) hosted a Diwali lunch at 12.30 on the 4th November 2010. The Administration staff had a fantastic time: they all dressed up in glamorous saris (well, the lasses at least!) for the day – drawing many a compliment from students and with staff suggesting that saris should be recommended dress to brighten the place up! There was then a special Diwali lunch (with music), the lovely food ranging from samosas to onion bhajis, lots of Asian sweets and cakes, and even less exotic, pizza! All was consumed at great pace and with full appreciation! The food was provided by Dipti Radia, Selina Thraves, plus Kathy, Lara, Sharon, Rachel, Julia, Pauline and Sue (most shown here in their saris):





The Emma and Laura Page: Reports on Pisa and Henley

Emma Hoornaert and Laura Massey are both BA Ancient History and Archaeology students, now in their third year but spending that on an exchange year abroad in Pisa. Here they give us a bit of an insight into their time so far in Italy (LM) and also tell us of their UK rowing exploits (EH):

It's hard to believe that Emma and I are actually in Pisa after a year and a half of preparation and attending Erasmus meetings. We've been here for two and a half months so far and I confess I have been a bit slow to write this report because I'm simply having too much fun!

The first big concern everyone had on arrival here was finding somewhere to live, as Pisa is a university that doesn't provide any accommodation for foreign students. Having said that I think finding your own accommodation adds to the

experience, it feels great when you finally agree to rent a room in a language you don't speak very well! Especially when your apartment has the best views you can buy (as all my housemates would agree) in Pisa (see photo)!

Before we came we spoke minimal Italian, but the two week intensive course we did when we arrived really helped and the great thing about Pisa is that you can do a free language course (for credits) in the first semester. I also have a tandem partner who I teach English in return for Italian lessons, so I'm getting there slowly!

University was a bit confusing to start as we had

to organise all our own lectures. There were many incidents when we discovered we couldn't take certain lectures because of a timetable clash or a professor on sabbatical, you just have to turn up to the lectures and hope for the best! Of course, the lectures all being in Italian are very difficult to understand but provided you let the lecturers know you are Erasmus, they are always willing to help you out. Student life here is good, although there is only one main club in Pisa 'Akua Keta', ESN (Erasmus Student Network) are always organising visits and parties, especially early on to help everyone get to know each other. Emma and I mix more with Erasmus students than anyone else we know some Italians and part of Erasmus is about getting to know more about many different cultures as well as that of your host country.

Pisa is a great city, it's big enough that there are things to do but at the same time everything is within walking/cycling distance including bars and supermarkets; there is also a regular meeting place for students (Piazza Garibaldi!). Although Pisa is known for being a tourist hotspot, not everywhere in the city is affected, but it's best to avoid walking through Piazza dei Miracoli with an umbrella when you are late for lectures - tourists with golf umbrellas are a major hazard! We are not far from the sea for beach trips, and only a one hour train journey from Florence! The trains here are generally much cheaper than Britain so we've got lots of trips planned, and have already visited towns such as Florence, Bologna and Lucca. We are both really looking forward to seeing what the rest of the year abroad will bring!

Girl power on the Thames

When people ask about your university experience everyone tells you that you should have more to talk about than just your course. So I took up rowing. After two years of preparation, more hours of training than we had hours of lectures, and the dedication of a squad and our coaches we achieved our goal. We were going to Henley! (For those who don't know what Henley is, it's like the Royal Ascot for rowers.) We felt like Olympians. The final squad consisted of Anne Menard, Katie-Jane Whitlock, Anouska Bartlett and me, Emma Hoornaert (on the right in the picture), with Stephen Mitchell coxing. Henley Women's Regatta took place between the 18th and 20th June 2010; the first day we rowed to qualify, which we did. Yes! The second day we raced the first heat, but unfortunately we were knocked out - noticeably by the crew who went on to win. But we felt like winners, as we had achieved what we set out to do, qualifying and showing that *ULBC* (University of Leicester Boat Club) is a force to be reckoned with.





'Pauline & Sue go up Pompeii': The secretarial Italian assault course, September 2010

After the disappointment of our cancelled trip back in April ironically because of the Icelandic volcano, the excitement was immense as we drove under the shadow of Mount Vesuvius and the reality that we were finally there! Our hotel was perfectly situated, just 90 metres from the main entrance of Pompeii, Porta Marina: walking past the site every morning and evening felt pretty special but it also meant walking past the stalls and the array of phallic gifts which Sue just could not resist (the picture shows one finely designed souvenir... - and no, the person behind was not with us)!!

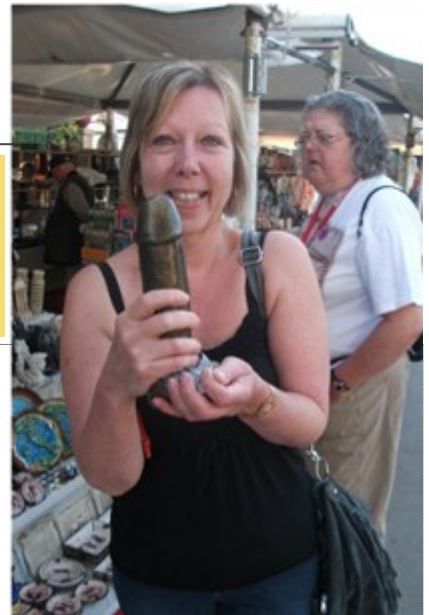
We spent the first whole day in Pompeii and even when our feet could take no more the adrenalin was still rushing as we went back that same evening for a sound & light show - 'Le Lune di Pompeii': this was extremely atmospheric; walking down the streets aglow with oil lamps, the garden of the Fugitives was even more emotional than in the day time; the tour ended in the amphitheatre with a spectacular light show of projected chariots - a truly magical experience.

Next on the itinerary was Herculaneum: we spent half a day in the site which, unlike Pompeii, we felt happily satisfied that we covered most if not all of the site, amazingly preserved the site captures one's imagination with a real sense of time travel. That afternoon was spent climbing Mount Vesuvius; looking down into the crater and being covered with cloud was pretty surreal.

While Day 3 at Sorrento featured a little bit of retail therapy and some sightseeing including the 12th century cloisters of Saint Francis, the archaeology resumed on Day 4 with a trip to Naples Museum; but after braving the streets of Naples we were rather disappointed to find that the building currently undergoing major refurbishment in consequence meant no access to the mosaics or frescos from Pompeii or, more importantly, the 'secret room'!! However, we quenched our thirst that

afternoon with a visit to the Flavian amphitheatre in Pozzuoli: the third largest Roman amphitheatre in Italy, this really is a gem, so well preserved as a result of being buried by eruptions from the Solfatara. Being off the beaten track also meant fewer tourists, though it did mean more mosquito bites for the two of us!

Day 5 was at Amalfi: the coastline is a definite must-



see, but the journey is not at all for the faint hearted! After several heated moments between coach drivers we arrived in Amalfi 5 hours later! But the Cathedral (see picture above) with its Arab-Norman Romanesque design and 9th century Basilica of the Crucifix were well worth it.

Our journey was almost over, but yes, you guessed it, we had to go back into Pompeii for one last peep! Through the Herculaneum gate, past the necropolis, we arrived at the Villa dei Misteri and were blown away with the wealth and quality of the frescos in the formal dining room (*triclinium*). With vast Mount Vesuvius as the backdrop this was a wonderful note to finish our journey on.

It was a fantastic week, and travelling independently allowed us more time to absorb the atmosphere and, most importantly for Sue, to have her Pink Floyd 'moment' (a full hour!) in Pompeii's amphitheatre. Every day we found ourselves in awe of Mount Vesuvius yet with a sense of gladness to have made the journey home - but don't get throwing away that plaster just yet as we are already planning our next trip...





PhD student news in Britain and beyond

We dig our manor!

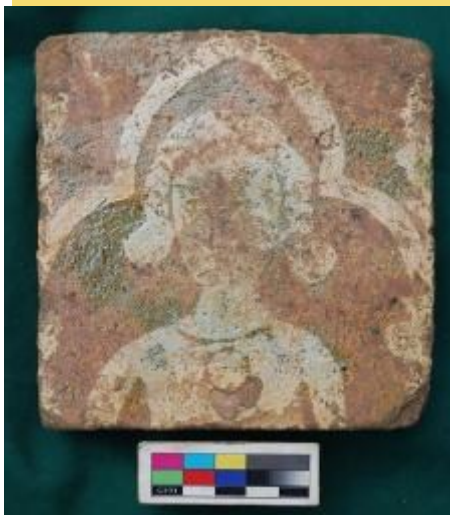
By Sophia Adams

July saw the 5th season of HLF funded excavations at Randall Manor in Shorne Woods Country Park, Kent. Under the direction of Community Archaeologist Andrew Mayfield, volunteers removed the demolition debris to reveal three construction phases of this medieval manor house with a kitchen range, hall and pebbled courtyard. Over 300 volunteers participated including local school children, energetic teenagers, students, professional archaeologists, keen adults and active retirees; from ages 3 to 80. Guided tours were given to 1500 visitors. Recording tasks were undertaken by those more easily persuaded to have a go. Plans are now afoot to create tactile diagrams following the involvement of a visually impaired volunteer.

Documentary research implies a c.1250 construction date for a substantial house here found with Kentish ragstone and flint walls. Chalk was utilised in foundation courses and interior walls, and sarsen stones added support to the corners of the structure. A combination of narrow and thick foundations suggests buildings with both wooden and stone walls. Later developments include the addition of a garderobe, extension of some buildings and reduction of others. A curious round structure with side flue was added onto the boundary wall to form a bakery or brewhouse or smokehouse (or any other suggestions?). By the late sixteenth century the site had fallen into disrepair possibly being quarried for stone to rebuild Cobham hall nearby. Of the special finds discovered a complete decorated floor tile is perhaps our most intriguing. It bears the torso of a woman wearing a circular brooch, framed by a Gothic style recess or window. No parallels have yet been identified and the tile itself may

never have been used in a floor.

The success of the project has been down to the enthusiasm of the volunteers who have driven the research agenda. The problem now is how to continue excavations and conserve the site when the funding ends in 2011.



Delving into the pottery of Hellenistic Koroneia. Mark van der Enden outlines his field studies:

For 3 years now, the Boeotia survey (directed by Prof. John Bintliff of Leiden University) has investigated by means of intensive field walking the Greco-Roman city of Koroneia (located in Boeotia, Greece). Thousands and thousands of sherds have been encountered during field walking, a sample of which has been collected for detailed ceramic analysis. The majority of this material can be dated to the Hellenistic period, suggesting a peak in settlement activity.



As part of my ceramics training I have been working as a ceramic specialist on the Hellenistic pottery of Koroneia. Working with Prof. Poblome, Prof. Stissi and Dr. Bes (renowned Hellenistic / Roman pottery experts) has allowed me to develop myself further in this field and acquire many necessary skills.

What are our preliminary conclusions with regard to Koroneia? Well, common in Hellenistic times and at Koroneia is the occurrence of black & red slipped (of varying quality) ceramic vessels. Pots are often not fully slipped and generally less carefully finished. Well known Hellenistic shapes as the mould made bowl and the fishplate are commonly encountered in our ceramic assemblages. The richness of the site has allowed us to identify and sample the whole range of ceramic functions available, from tableware to cooking and domestic wares.

The material analyzed so far can be set to the middle and late Hellenistic period. The Early Roman phase of the site is also particularly strong, whereas the Middle and Late Roman period are less well defined. Most pottery seems of local or regional manufacture, and the presence of kiln waste, equipment, moulds and misfired products indicates a high quality local production both in the Hellenistic (e.g. Mould made bowls) and Early Roman period (high quality red gloss wares).

The ceramic analysis of the Koroneian material is still a work in progress and is continuously modified by new discoveries in the field. Focus currently lies on the identification of specific patterns of production and consumption and the identification of functional zones (e.g. domestic, artisanal, public, religious). For example, last August a Classical / Hellenistic sanctuary location was identified, yielding many figurines and votive pottery.

With each studied sherd our picture of the city of Koroneia becomes clearer. One of the great attractions of ceramic analysis is to see the city coming to life right in front of you!



Excavating on a Crumbling Chateau in Switzerland

By **Chantal Biemann** (PhD, year 2)

This past summer, in between some very fulfilling field-work and site visits to enhance my PhD (on late antique Switzerland and its Christianisation), I enjoyed taking part on an excavation of a medieval chateau in Bossonnens with the Fribourg Archaeological Services in Switzerland. Bossonnens is a small village near Chatel-St-Denis and the Paccots Mountains, only 15 minutes away from Vevey, which borders Lake Geneva and where, from time to time, the team of students and excavators from Switzerland, Germany, Italy and Canada (aka me) would take a quick dip during our lunch breaks.



Me painstakingly plotting more stones in the exotically named Trench 3!



The state of the chateau itself (see picture to left) was far from glamorous: placed upon a small crag of rock, the crumbling rampart is the first item which greets any visitor to the site. Following along the external wall to the west, one can see an attempt to reconstruct the castle when suddenly the small bricks are replaced by giant limestone blocks.

Further along into the forest, one finds a lone round tower, seemingly separate from the chateau. Over many excavation periods, archaeologists and local medievalists have raised and tackled various questions regarding the site: what was the plan of the chateau? How did the isolated round tower connect with the rest of the structure? What is the chronology of the site? While medieval records in Switzerland account for a castle in Bossonnens in the 13th century and a fire in the 15th century caused by cantonal strife between the Fribourgeois and Bernese, it is unclear when the chateau was first constructed, who built it and why.

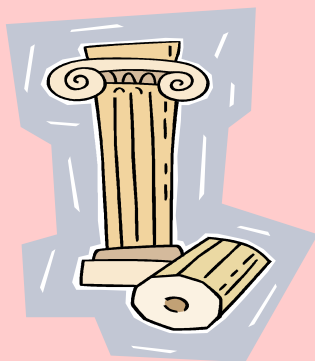
This summer 2010, three trenches were excavated: an eastern one to study the internal attributes of the site; a western one to study the entrance of the castle; and the third trench which I excavated in, was opened to clarify the layout of the western wall. After digging to a depth of almost 2 metres, we confirmed the presence of large triangular window in the 1.5 m wide wall. An impressive flagstone occupied half of the base of the opening, the rest made of up stones and mortar; there was indeed evidence for fire here. The questions remain to be answered, but the finds at least help confirm the site's date range and point to its end.

My three weeks of digging there had their ups and downs. Besides the hard work of lugging wheelbarrows, swinging mattocks, and drawing, there were some interesting moments, such as fleeing from a giant 'talin', a bug which, if you get stung once, a trip to hospital is necessary, but stung thrice is likely death (so they say); enjoying beer at the end of the day with the team; and celebrating the end of the excavation with an 'apéro' of wine, cheese, and cold cuts. Thanks go out to the Schrago and Biemann families whose home cooked meals, various homemade wines and liqueurs, cheeses and desserts certainly kept me very sustained for the summer. And the scenery was v. nice too!



A typically happy team shot—I'm second on the table on the right. The table seems oddly clear of beer glasses ...

The 'Dear Deirdre' Column



Intriguing and learned advice and guidance...

Dear Deirdre,

How do I get to escape from working in the Attenborough Tower? How did Archaeology and Ancient History manage it some years ago?

(Identity Withheld, Leicester)

I'm not sure I've got a solution to your problem, IW. It is true that most of my dept got to move to a more amenable set of accommodations in 2004, but it took a long, long time to bring this about. There were many failed campaigns. Why, way back in the 80s we even managed to briefly occupy part of the Fielding Johnson building, but then lost the space to Psychology, who played the student numbers card to good effect. We used a variety of tactics to make our presence in Attenborough unwelcome, including rendering down long dead, malodorous seabirds for the reference collection; hogging, and breaking, the communal Arts photocopier at every opportunity; colonising and filling any available void with boxes and sacks of 'stuff'. And there was always mud, the supplies of which became virtually infinite when the field unit got going in the late 90s.

So, although we took it on the chin, I don't recall much in the way of 'so sad to see you go' cards from the remaining Attenborough residents when we left. You may be able to handle the agro, but your research into reality TV blogs doesn't offer these real time opportunities.

The Estates Office must have an enormous archive of complaints about the difficulties of living in this challenging space. I believe that there are at least two full filing cabinets of communications relating to the famous Emulsiongate* episode alone – though I bet they are closely guarded. The Aida-like entombment of the building in shutters and scaffolding is fortunately now a thing of the past, but the creaking windows, grey concrete and perennially dysfunctional lifts are not really compensated by the occasional good view.

I wouldn't hold out your hopes, but one obvious way forward is to suggest a general swap. Rather than accommodating lots of staff and students who need to move around a lot, it makes sense to me to put some of the more faceless aspects of the university admin there. Estates themselves might be a good idea – they don't seem to get out much – but Human Resources might also enjoy the opportunities for exercise and social engagement that the Tower provides. Funnily enough, they don't seem to have come up with this idea themselves....

Best of Luck— Deirdre

**Interdisciplinary Revolutionary Co-operative set up to do something about the grey concrete – no known survivors. There wasn't an Archaeology cell – we are too ideologically committed to authenticity in monument conservation.*

Dear Deirdre,

We will be graduating this summer and think we should buy suits for job interviews. What style/colour do you advise?

Finbar and Fergal (from Cork)

It is good to see that you are still thinking forward, Finbar (and your new chum Fergal, of course!). As I don't know what you look like, I can't really tell how you would appear in a suit. However, if you are as Hiberno-freckly as your names suggest, I have a few tips. Avoid a very dark shade – this throws freckles into sharp relief, and for some reason brown does not work well either – stick to charcoal, with a hint of green or blue if that is to your taste. If you are blessed with dark hair and a sallow complexion, you will look fine in a dark suit. Lithe and lissom people look good in suits – always an incentive to work on those abs.

I'm not really very strong on suits – I am scarred by early encounters with wide-lapelled and bell-bottomed outfits, accompanied by vivid kipper ties. Fortunately these garments are now pushing up the daisies, and there are many fine suits out there – but if you want one that will multitask for funerals and weddings as well as job-seeking, don't go for anything over-styled or attention-seeking. Steer clear of significant pinstripes, and double-breasted or over-long jackets.

Buying a decent suit is a considerable expense, and unless you are planning to join a profession where this dress code is required (banker, gangster, bouncer), you don't necessarily need a suit for job interviews; obviously you must be well-scrubbed and sweetly scented, but a jacket and tie will often fit the ticket. I could also mention that there are many bargains to be had in thrift shops if you have the chutzpah to try things on in these rather public places. Oh, by the way, always get your hair cut one week before an interview or big day; never have it done the day before!

All the best, Deirdre

SCHOOL RESEARCH SEMINARS — JOIN US!!!

And a final reminder: the School hosts a regular Wednesday pm Research Seminar during term time, with speakers (staff and PhD crew, ULAS members) from the department or affiliated departments at Leicester, plus outside speakers, whether academics, commercial field directors, museum staff, etc. Ranging from themes in ancient history through to modern archaeological debates or new field evidence, these are stimulating and relaxed gatherings. All students of all years are invited as well as staff. Organised mainly by keen PhD students, the gatherings begin in the foyer at 4.30 with drinks and, more importantly, themed cakes—see here a brave Asterix attacking remains of an edible Hadrian's Wall—before the serious talking begins at 5pm in the Charles Wilson building (Floor 2, Belvoir Park Lounge).

