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# NUNTIUS

The Newsletter of The Friends of Brading Roman Villa



**BRADING ROMAN VILLA - HYPERCAUST** (see Chairman's Letter)

## Chairman's Report: Summer 2019

Dear Friends,

In my last Nuntius report I reported that the ORT was having problems with their website and email addresses. This has now hopefully been resolved and a new Villa website is online. In order to access Friends information visit our website: [www.fbrv.org.uk](http://www.fbrv.org.uk)

I'm sad to say that 3 members of the Villa staff have moved on to pastures new, Julie Padley who looked after the shop and front desk, Dave Holmes front of house in the café and Adam Watson the Villa's CEO. On behalf of the Friends I would like to thank them for their help over the years and wish them well for the future. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of June Adam Watson's place at the Villa was filled by Rob Flower who has many years of experience working in the heritage sector. I'm sure that once Rob has settled in Rev Michael Whitfield our Editor will interview him for Nuntius.

Since the last issue of Nuntius the 3D project has been completed. 2 of the 3 small display monitors donated by the Friends have been turned on, both are in the drum tower. 1 is showing a 3D working model of the Hypocaust room in the North Range, and the other is showing an aerial view of how the landscape around the Villa may have looked in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century. The third screen is on the west wall of the museum and is yet to be activated.

I'm pleased to be able to report that, as part of the 3D project, a 65inch monitor donated by the Friends has been installed in the museum and is showing a 3D interpretation of the Villa complex as it may have been in the mid-4<sup>th</sup> century. Feedback from visitors has been very good

Please do come along to the Villa and watch the 5 minute video. You will be taken on an aerial tour of the site as it is today then transported back in time to the Roman buildings, entering by the front door of the West Range where you will be taken around the various rooms before moving on to the North Range. You will visit the long barn, offices and living rooms, and end with a walk through the bath house. Having been involved with this aspect of the signage project for 3 years I still find the visual interpretation stunning, the full height of the North Range barn is just as Sir Barry Cunliffe described it in his Big Dig report.

The Friends have also sponsored the printing of several copies of the Geological Ordinance Survey map of the Brading area showing where the water level was until being drained by Victorian engineers. A copy is on display in the drum tower. This map was part of the research undertaken to show the Roman landscape and the Villa's proximity to the water.

There is a problem with the cover building over the hypocaust room in the North Range. It was erected in c1911 and is now at the end of its useful life and no amount of maintenance will save it. I believe that the advice from English Heritage is to remove the building and backfill the room. Because of the condition of the building this is a matter of urgency, if the hypocaust is to be preserved for the future it will need to be done as soon as possible. The estimated cost of backfilling the room is in the region of £5000. The long term plan is for the room to be re-excavated in the future and a new building put over it when funds allow.

The coffee mornings held on the first Tuesday of the month at 11am in the Villa café continue to be well attended. Feel free to come along and meet other members of the Friends and trustees. It's worth it just for the cakes on sale.

I would like to end by thanking you for your continuing support of the FBRV and the Villa. I would also like to thank the volunteers/trustees who give their time and energy in many ways in order to help the Villa function as a first class museum and visitor attraction. I look forward to meeting you at the Villa.

David Reeves. FRSM.  
Chairman FBRV.

## Meet the Team: Stewart White – ORT Trustee

*As a frequent visitor to the Villa, I am aware there are a number of regular faces who are part of the team that ensures the smooth running of the museum, but whom I know little about. So for a while I shall be including a new feature called "Meet the Team", which will be a short interview with willing members of the team. In this issue we have a relatively recent addition to the ORT, Trustee Stewart White, Stewart is also a Friend the villa. Ed.*



Stewart is married with two grown up children and lives in Bembridge.

Educated in Sydney and Cambridge he holds a Master's Degree in International Law and an Honours Degree in History and Law.

Stewart works in Law and Consultancy on a global scale and has a wide field of expertise. He has (among many) interests in History, Archaeology and Egyptology, especially The Antinoupolis Foundation, dedicated to preserving this ancient city founded by Emperor Hadrian. He is also involved with the British Museum.

The ORT appointed Stewart to the Board of Trustees in December 2017 where he chairs the Archaeology Committee. Our informal discussion included the ORT's vision to make sustainable changes to improve the museum experience for visitors, staff and volunteers, both of whom Stewart believes do an amazing job.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Stewart for his time and commitment and I'm glad we have got to know him a little better.

Ed.

*(Stuart will be giving at talk to FBRV on 1st February 2020 -2.30pm)*

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

## Advance Notice

**The next AGM of the Friends will take place on  
Saturday 7 March 2020 at 3.30pm at the Villa.**

**Please make a note of this date now and come along on the day  
to support your Trustees**

# Brading Roman Villa 3D Reconstruction

By Scott Church.

Using 21st century entertainment technology and the latest multimedia developments for museums we will bring to the Brading Roman Villa visitor a new and exciting experience.

## The Process

To begin: 2D plans of the villa layout from Sir Barry Cunliffe's Big Dig report are scanned and used as "blueprints" for the start of the layout of the modelling process within 3D modelling program called Maya. 3D modelling is essentially creating shapes within a 3D world. After blocking out the "greybox" or basic model, a more detailed higher poly model is created. This will be the final model seen in the images.

Once a model is adequately built, you then arrange the UV coordinates of the model to match its 2-D textures in a process called UV mapping. Areas that require more detail are given more space in the UV map. This can be done either using a repeating textures or using a custom painted texture.

All the models are then textured. For the Brading Roman villa project I used the Quixel suite and Megascans library as this gives access to a wide library of physically accurate real world scanned materials, ensuring they react and look real within the 3D lighting environment. The mosaics were scanned from images and cleaned up within Photoshop.

For the interior shots the cameras needed to be setup and animated within the 3D scene just as they would within real world filming. Blocking out the cameras is called a Pre Vis. These low quality renders help with shot selection and represent how the final animation will look from camera shots in a similar way to storyboarding.

The 3D scene also needs lighting, for the Brading project I used a single HDRI - High-dynamic-range imaging. CGI benefits from this as it creates more realistic scenes than with the more simplistic lighting models used as it uses a real world image that has captured a lighting environment to create the lighting in a 3D scene.

As the reconstructed villa had to be matched to drone footage this meant the drone footage needed to be tracked, a cinematic technique that allows the insertion of

computer graphics into live-action footage with correct position, scale, orientation, and motion relative to the objects in the shot.

The next step after setting up the scenes is rendering. Rendering is the final process of creating the actual 2D image or animation from the prepared scene. This can be compared to taking a photo or filming the scene after the setup is finished in real life. Rendering may take from fractions of a second to days for a single image/frame. The rendering process is computationally expensive, given the complex variety of physical processes being simulated for photo realistic rendering.

As the drone footage was taken from the modern view, all the buildings and modern landscape needed to be painted out and the water added using matte paintings inside Photoshop, Maya and Adobe After Effects. A matte painting is a painted representation of a landscape, set, or distant location that allows filmmakers to create the illusion of an environment that is not present at the filming location.

Next is Compositing. This is the combining of visual elements from separate sources into single images, to create the illusion that all those elements are parts of the same scene. Here the tracked drone footage, matte paintings, 3d renderings and VFX elements such as smoke are all combined into the final shots inside Adobe After Effects. Once composited the footage is then edited and cut together inside Adobe Premier Pro. The footage is then colour corrected and colour graded to balance the colour and look and feel of the images before the final rendering of the entire image sequence.

**The 3D project is sponsored by: The Friends of Brading Roman Villa. (FBRV) Down to the Coast. Association for the Study and Preservation of Roman Mosaics. (ASPROM)**

*(The following video link shows how Scott produced the main video, one of three commissioned by Brading Roman Villa. Copy & paste this link into your browser: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fo9PylvDeM&feature=youtube> Ed. )*

# The Roman City of Soli

By David Reeves.

## February 2019.

In April 2015 a group of Friends from the Villa visited the Southern part of Cyprus. We were fortunate to have the chance to visit the North of the Island, visiting the Roman city of Salamis. This one day visit gave me the taste for more, so, when the opportunity arrived in the form of a good deal to spend a week in the North of Cyprus 4 of us took advantage of it. As well as returning to Salamis we visited a number of historic sites, including the Roman City of Soli. Unfortunately a lot of the standing stones at Soli were looted by the British and sold off to help build the Suez Canal; the Roman theatre is mainly a modern reconstruction.

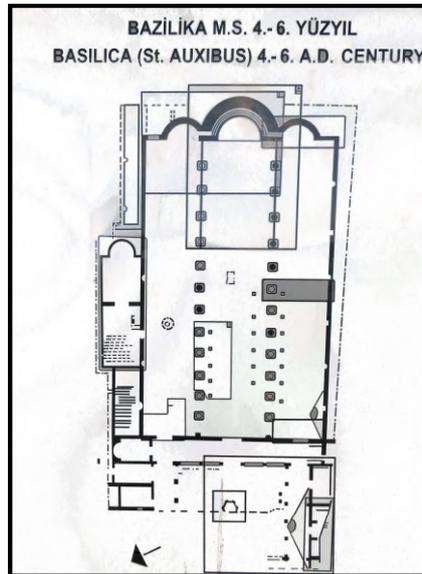


The main excavated building is the Basilica of St. Auxibius, the remains are covered by a modern roof and unfortunately there are no walls. This allows dirt to blow in, birds to mess on the mosaics, I did attempt to photograph the site and some of the interpretation boards however the results are not as good as I would have liked, so please forgive the quality of any photos. Val Pits has written elsewhere in this copy of Nuntius covering our trip to Northern Cyprus.

## The Roman City of Soli

Soli was one of the most important ancient city kingdoms established in Cyprus, dating from the 11th century BC and located at the northwest end of the island at Lefka which is the greenest corner of the island, surrounded with an abundance of walnut, citrus and date trees. Soli is seen to hold an important

position due to its strategic position, fertile fields and copper mines. The name of Soli is associated with Philosopher Solon. King Philokypros wanted to move the centre of the city to a better place. The place was recommended by Solon to be the beautiful, green and a strategic position. The king named the city Soli after Solon's name. Soli was part of the brightest period during the Bronze Age, late Roman and Christianity periods. The Arab raids in the 7th century saw the end of the city. Gold and silver jewellery from the Hellenistic period, a marble Love and Beauty goddess Aphrodite sculpture from the 1st century AD, a relief dating to the 2nd century BC,



Illustrating war with the Amazons, was discovered in the archaeological excavations of Swedish (1927-30) and Canadian Expedition Teams. (1965 -1974) Many tombs from the Geometric Period (1050-750BC to Roman Periods (58-50BC -395 AD) were found in the necropolis area.

Soli is believed to be the place where St. Auxibius was baptized by St. Mark, a Roman Christian who came to Soli in 1st century AD. Auxibius later became the first bishop of the Church of Soli. It is known that the Soli Basilica was built in the second half of the 4th century, one of the early Christian Basilicas built in Cyprus. Although widened in the 5th and 6th centuries, it has been destroyed by the Arab raids of the 7th century. There is a fountain courtyard surrounded by pillars on all four sides of the Church, which has three gated entrances. Inside the church there are twelve columns arranged in two rows, most of the mosaics pavements in the church are geometric and animal figurines. The symbol of the city is the beautiful swan mosaic found in the basilica.

The Soli Roman Theatre was built on the slope of a hill overlooking the sea, between the end of the 2nd century AD and the beginning of 3rd century AD. The semi-circle section of the audience seating was carved

into the rocky part of the hill. With this section, the middle chorus is separated by a low wall made of limestone and the entrance to the chorus and seating areas is provided by passageways at the sides. The seating capacity is estimated at 4000 people. The theatre and the stage building were made up of two storeys and decorated with marble and sculptures. On a hill west of the theatre there are traces of a temple dedicated to Aphrodite.

Most of the ancient city is still unexcavated; however, you can visit St. Auxibius Basilica, the Theatre and Agora (marketplace). During the excavations carried out in 2005 - 2006 by the Museum and Antiquities Department, gold jewellery and archaeological artefacts, dated back to the classical period (480-310 BC) were unearthed in the necropolis area. These are exhibited in the Museum of Archaeology and Nature in Gilzelyurt.

## History and Archaeology in Northern Cyprus

By Val Pitts

With its strategic position at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, Cyprus has seen many waves of invaders and regime changes throughout the millennia, all leaving the distinctive remains of their cultures. The latest such change in 1974 saw the migration of the Greek population to the south of the Island, leaving the Turkish North closed off to foreign visitors for many years. Opening of the border in recent years has meant that travel is possible again and, indeed, tourism is now actively encouraged as a source of much needed foreign currency. Thus, in January, David and Tricia Reeves and Bob and Val Pitts set off on a tour which promised 'Ancient Advanced Culture, Crusader Castles and beautiful scenery', although the journey involved changing planes at Antalya in Turkey as direct flights to the internationally unrecognised Democratic Republic of Northern Cyprus are not permitted.

The tour itinerary certainly lived up to its title and, over the course of the week, we visited many sites of historic and archaeological interest of which I will pick a few, while, elsewhere, David has described the ancient site of Soli.

### Salamis

On the coast just north of Famagusta lie the remains of what was once the principal city state of Cyprus. The earliest archaeological finds go back to

the eleventh century BC (Late Bronze Age) and the city has been home to Phoenicians, Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, and played a significant role in the early years of Christianity. Destroyed by earthquakes, buried in sand, looted and used as a useful quarry, excavations, particularly in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have partially uncovered this extensive site.



The most impressive remains are of the public buildings of the Trajanic and Hadrianic periods, especially the colonnaded palaestra, the baths and public latrines, seating capacity 44, and the theatre, seating capacity 15,000.



Nearby is the **Monastery of St Barnabas**, the Patron Saint of Cyprus. Paul and the Cypriot-born Barnabas landed at Salamis on their first missionary journey. The



preachings of Barnabas led to the conversion of the then-Roman ruler of Cyprus. Ironically Barnabas was later stoned to death and legend says that his body was hidden in a secret tomb in part of the Salamis necropolis by his friend John Mark and his followers. It was discovered around 480AD by Bishop Anthemios after he had a dream in which he saw the location of the long-lost tomb. St. Barnabas was found to be holding

an illuminated Gospel of St. Matthew. The present monastery is an 18<sup>th</sup> century replacement for the original Byzantine building, while Barnabas' tomb lies in a separate building close by. Although now functioning as an Icon museum, the opening of the border has meant that this important church is again a place of pilgrimage for Orthodox Christians.

Perhaps one of most unexpected and memorable experiences of our tour was the stunning collection of Cypriot pottery and other artefacts from the Salamis necropolis dating back to the Bronze Age, which are kept in the monks' old cells surrounding the Monastery courtyard. Here there was room after room of extraordinary pots and figurines in simple glass cases with minimal labelling. It must be one of the best collections of such wares in the North and yet it seems to be



largely uncelebrated. The lighting conditions made photography difficult, but here are a few examples.



### Shipwreck Museum at Kyrenia Castle

Around 300BC, a Greek trading vessel laden with millstones and wine amphorae from Kos, Samos and Rhodes set sail for Cyprus.

The ship was caught in a storm, and was wrecked outside Kyrenia harbour, it then

sat on the seabed covered in sand until discovered by a sponge diver in 1965. A rescue team brought the remains of both ship and cargo to the surface in a delicate operation to recover what was then the oldest discovered ship in the world. The ship itself was apparently around 80 years old when it sank, and had been repaired



several times, including having a skin of lead applied to the outside to keep it watertight. The preserved remains included 9000 almonds and the crew of



four's domestic utensils and fishing weights. The conserved remains, photographs of the rescue and map of the ship's

likely route are displayed in controlled atmosphere conditions and give a fascinating glimpse of marine trade in the time of Alexander the Great.

### St Hilarion Castle

Perched on a hilltop in the mountains inland from Kyrenia are the ruins of a castle begun in Byzantine times as a look-out and defence against Arab raiders. In 1191 Guy de Lusignan seized control of St Hilarion, defeating the Byzantine ruler and the



castle was expanded and used as both a military outpost and a summer residence of the Lusignan court.

Later, during Venetian rule, the castle was neglected and fell into disrepair. Today the military connection remains with a Turkish military base located on the ridge below. The Lower and Middle Wards of the castle were for a garrison with stabling and administrative buildings, while the Upper Ward had the Royal Apartments. The climb to the top was accessible to those with Ventnor-trained legs and the views were breathtaking, amply fulfilling the promise of the title of the tour.



# HOW I CAUGHT THE I.A.B (Industrial Archaeology Bug) Helen Williams

*We often get carried away reporting about wonderful classic archaeological digs, especially Roman. We are excited at the prospect of finding yet another mosaic or the evidence of a temple or even the many artefacts and hoards that have been stashed away by their owners and I too find hem fascinating. However a recent conversation with Helen got me thinking about another aspect of archaeology - industrial archaeology and I persuaded Helen to write a piece about a dig which she participated in here on the island at Dodnor on the river Medina. It may not be so romantic as finding a Roman villa, but just as fascinating. It is preceded by a short article on Roman Cement which is the connection here. Ed.*

## ROMAN CEMENT

From earliest times, humans have tried to stick stones together to construct dwellings. The Ancient Egyptians developed a kind of mortar to join their stone blocks together, using a combination of sand and gypsum, which they burned first. They even had a kind of concrete, which they made by adding coarser stones into the mix.

The Romans, instead of gypsum, preferred to use lime. Heating or burning lime makes "quicklime". When this is then ground down to a powder, and mixed with sand, you have mortar. Quicklime mortar sets because as it dries it absorbs carbon dioxide from (primarily) the air around, and so reverts to hard calcium carbonate again. However, inside a thick construction, or in the presence of water, this type of cement will not "go off" or harden, so is referred to as "Non-Hydraulic " cement.

However, those ever inventive Romans soon discovered that if volcanic ash was added to the burnt lime (thereby adding silica and /or alumina), the resulting concoction would set hard by reacting WITH water, rather than simply drying out over time. They may not have fully understood the chemistry behind this, but they could now make form of cement that would not only set in the presence of water, but actually UNDER it ~ Hydraulic Cement.

The Romans, when they conquered Britain during the first century AD, brought with them the technical knowledge of how to manufacture this "Roman Cement". They used it extensively, and it can still be seen in constructions such as the Roman lighthouse,

the Pharos, within Dover Castle, and in the great wall which they built around London, remnants of which are still in existence. When the Roman Army withdrew from Britain in AD 410, taking with them so many skills and so much technical knowledge, this "recipe" was lost. Nothing like it was to re appear in Britain for well over a thousand years.

During the Industrial Revolution, and from the latter part of the 18thC to the early part of the 19thC, several people in several places were working on recreating this Hydraulic Cement. It was manufactured in London, and eventually came to be made in vast quantities here on our Island, at the West Medina Cement Mill. It was exported from here all over the British Isles. Used in many famous buildings, including the Eddystone Lighthouse, it came to be known as "Medina" cement, later Portland cement. It was also sometimes still called "Roman" cement, although the recipe was not quite the same. No volcanic ash was available here, and the silica element was introduced by using clay. In addition, Septarium, or cement stone was also used, and it is thought that this could at the time, be dredged up from the Medina river bed.

## THE DODNOR DIG

It has long been on my "bucket " list to get involved somehow on a real, actual dig site. I didn't mind in what way, however humble. I would be happy to wash bits of pot, or even make the tea, just so long as I could be involved, just once, in some real life "Time Team".

On mentioning this to a friend, she said that she was just about to head up a new project, why didn't I come along, and she would show me round, let me do a little digging under supervision. Perfect!

The site turned out to be the old "Mummies caves", beloved of an earlier generation as a secret hideout play place, now extensively overgrown, and fenced off as dangerous to the public. In reality, these "caves" are the remains of Victorian kilns, used for drying cement slurry, at the former Medina Cement Mills. These were situated at Dodnor, with the R. Medina to the East, and the (then) railway line running past on the West. The once extensive site is now largely occupied by "Vestas", but a small area remained untouched.

Prior to our first visit, a huge amount of work had been done by "Gift to Nature" and "The Green Gym" to clear away overgrown greenery, and the team were ready to start the dig. Headed up by qualified archaeologist Dr. Ruth Waller, the team also had students, and many volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

We only meant to go just the once, to look round, and "have a go". However, after that first visit, my husband Mark and I were well and truly hooked. We didn't just want to play at it any more, we wanted to really be a part of this amazing project to uncover the past, build a picture that might differ from previous understanding, dig up things that might just have been last seen and handled a century ago.

We learned so much! To start with, we had to be fully familiar with dig site health and safety. This included the usual risk assessments, suitable clothing, with particular respect to footwear and headgear, most of it common sense. We had to keep a site log, signing in and out each session. There was, of course, an accident book, and a trained first aider always present.

Next came the process of recording. This

was done with photographs, with a ranging rod placed for scale, with pegs and string forming a boundary, and later a grid.

Meticulous measurements were made and recorded, and written record made of first impressions, weather conditions, and so on. All this before we went anywhere near the earth with a spade or a trowel.



Then we finally opened a trench. We learned how to lift the first sods, how to trowel properly ~ always towards yourself, and very delicately. We learned when to stop and use a brush, and never to pull out roots, always cut them, and then dig deeper round them. There was

much hilarity one day when the dig leader thought that she observed a gentleman pull out a root, rather than cut ~ but it was actually a large worm being removed! We learned to record soil conditions, to detect layers and changes, and Oh! the excitement of a "find", however humble. I remember when we found the first piece of "Septaria", conclusively proving that they made cement there. We knew this anyway, of course, the history not being that ancient, so not in doubt. However there is undoubtedly

something very special about finding such "proof" on a site. We also learned a lot about bucket after heavy bucket having to be carted to the spoils heap, it is not all glamorous!

The final results of all the work done on site by a whole team, was a much better understanding of the

processes involved in the manufacture of cement, and some new discoveries which actually changed previous knowledge.

Next up in the pursuit of Industrial Archaeology, I am joining a team digging the site of the former Steam Railway Station at Merstone. Can't wait!

**Further (fascinating) reading:-** "West Medina Cement Mill", a History, by Alan Dinnis.



# Friends of Brading Roman Villa Trip to Hadrian's Wall - 27<sup>th</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019

By Fanny Oglander

## Getting there

After an early start from the Island our coach devoured the motorway miles until mid-afternoon. Somewhere near Preston we took a turn off to Ribchester on the River Ribble where there are remains of a Roman fort. In fact a whole Roman town lies under the present town. In the museum we got a taste of the finely crafted metal and stone work made by cavalry from Asturias in Northern Spain, in particular a bronze ceremonial helmet.



It was late afternoon when we arrived at our hotel: The Gilsland Spa Hotel. This is a surprisingly huge, grand building overlooking the valley of the River Irthing. The hotel was a spacious and comfortable, slightly old-fashioned place to stay, complete with ballroom and live music every evening.

We spent a total of four days visiting the Wall. The Wall was 80 Roman Miles long (that is 73 modern miles), and at every Roman mile was a small fort called Milecastle and they are numbered from east to west. Between every two Milecastles were two turrets which are numbered A and B after the preceding Milecastle. Our hotel was near Milecastle 48.

We were privileged to have a most wonderful guide for our tour. Dr. Nick Hodgson, a professional archaeologist who has spent over 30 years working for Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums. Dr. Hodgson wrote the guide books for several of the sites that we visited. He was outstandingly good at communicating the story behind the sites that we were visiting. His recently

published book: Hadrian's Wall. Archaeology and History at the Limit of the Roman Empire, is available in the Friends' Library.

## Day 1

On our first morning we set off eastwards, in the direction of Newcastle, to see turret 26B at Brunton.



The turret was two storeys high there are about 2.5 meters still standing. We learned about broad Wall and narrow Wall. When the building of Hadrian's Wall was first started it was to be 3 metres wide (10 Roman Feet) that is broad Wall. On one side of the turret the Wall is broad Wall, and on the other side the Wall is about 2.5 meters wide. Yet the narrow Wall stands on a foundation that had been laid out for broad Wall. In addition to the milecastles there were about 15 wall forts. These were each of a standard design, shaped like a playing card.

Our next stop was Chesters. This is a stunningly beautiful place with views across the valley of the Lower Tyne River. I was impressed by the barracks for the Asturian cavalry unit. Both riders and horses are thought to have shared each barrack building, and there was a pit under the stable floor of each barrack for the poo....

Just outside the fort there is a very well preserved bath house. That must have been appreciated by those cavalymen who had to share accommodation with their horses.

In the afternoon we visited the Roman town of Corbridge. This is not directly on the Wall but predated it and lies to the south-east of Chesters, at the crossing of two Roman Roads: Stane Street, running East-West, and Dere Street, running North-South. There was a huge amount to see but particularly impressive were massive granaries, built with raised and ventilated stone

flooring. These would have been needed for the logistics of supplying all the soldiers involved in building and manning the Wall.



On our way back to our hotel we stopped to visit a Mithraic temple situated near an unexcavated Roman fort at Carrawburgh. The small temple was excavated in the 1950's. Three Mithraic altars were found there and replicas now stand on the site. The temple was probably built by soldiers based at the fort, in about 200 AD. It was destroyed around 330 AD, possibly by Christians. Finally we returned to our hotel to mull over the four sites we had seen on our first day. After dinner Dr. Hodgson gave a talk and slide show covering some of the places we were to visit later in the week.

## Day 2

On Day Two we travelled all the way east to Wallsend. As we drove to Newcastle, on a very straight road, we were actually driving on top of Hadrian's Wall. Back in the Eighteenth Century, during the Jacobite rebellion of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the English Army had used the stone of Hadrian's Wall as the base of a new road. It is called the military road today. Although it is a pity that the English Army vandalised the Roman's work, it did feel exciting to be actually driving on top of the wall. In several places, as we drove along, we could follow the earthwork banks known as the Vallum; bits of the Vallum even appeared next to streets in the suburbs of Newcastle. Wallsend used to be the home of the Swan and Hunter shipyard. The Roman name of the fort here is Segedunum. The wall continues for a short distance past the fort down to meet the River Tyne where the river is wide enough to act as a barrier itself. Unfortunately the very end of the wall was destroyed when Swan and Hunter shipyard was built. There is a short reconstruction of the wall next to an excavated section.

(This photograph of the reconstructed wall is being securely supported by Friends President Neville Car and his wife Eileen.



By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the site of the Segedunum fort had been completely built over with Victorian houses, so nothing at all would have been visible had not the housing eventually been pulled down. I was particularly interested in the Roman baths, excavated as recently as 2014 and 2015. As at Chesters, these were just outside the fort. Dr. Hodgson had played a leading role in the excavation project that was undertaken by a local group of volunteers. They were the Friends of Segedunum Roman Fort and the Wallsend Local History Society. I think of them as the Newcastle equivalent of the Friends of Brading Roman Villa.

The Baths that had first been discovered and described in 1814 but had since been lost because a pub was built over the site. Once the pub had been demolished the site became available for excavation.

This was the first opportunity to excavate baths on a Wall fort using modern archaeological techniques. Dr. Hodgson writes in the guide book, Hadrian's Wall on Tyneside: "At Wallsend it has been possible to understand in detail for the first time how and why a Roman bath building was altered over the one and a half centuries it was in use." The baths were really impressive but the irony is that a reconstructed set of Roman baths had recently been built to show visitors what the Roman baths might have looked like. Unfortunately the replica bathhouse is closed for repairs. From Wallsend we travelled to the fort at South Shields called Arbeia. This fort was used as a supply base for the Roman Army at Hadrian's Wall. It had 24 granaries, each built with a raised stone floor with ventilation underneath. At Arbeia there are full size reconstructions of the Commanders house, a row of barracks and one of the forts gatehouses. The scale of the infrastructure that was designed for Hadrian's Wall is mind-blowing.

*(Picture of reconstructed gate house at Arbeia on next page)*



**Day 3**

Day three saw us back on the central part of the Wall; we stopped at Cawfields milecastle, number 42, on our way to Vindolanda. The landscape at Cawfields is craggy and dramatic; the wall looks spectacular, however it is a pity that a large chunk of wall is missing due to the hillside being quarried for granite. Quarrying finally stopped in 1952

Vindolanda is famous for its wooden writing tablets, the size of postcards and can be read online: We were shown the site of present day excavations by archaeologist, Dr Andrew Birley. He explained the special techniques used to find and conserve the objects preserved in the anaerobic conditions of the site.

There is an interesting story to be told about Andrew Birley's family. Vindolanda was one of the sites that had been bought and protected by John Clayton. Clayton's descendants continued to protect the sites until 1929 when the last of them died. Vindolanda was then put up for auction and Eric Birley, a 23 year old Classics scholar who had been working on the Wall, managed to successfully bid for it. He and later his son, Robin, excavated there. It was Robin Birley who was leading the excavations in 1973 when the Vindolanda tablets were discovered. Dr. Andrew Birley, whom we met, is the son of Robin Birley and grandson of Eric. I am impressed by the extent to which the dedication and passion of individuals and families lies behind the sites along Hadrian's Wall that we can enjoy today. The onsite museum is overflowing with artefacts found on the site, including a Roman wooden toilet seat. Leather and wood is particular well preserved with an extensive collection of leather shoes.

I



could have spent much longer at Vindolanda but in the afternoon we were whisked along to the nearby Roman Army Museum. It was raining heavily by then but this was an indoor visit. Amongst the audio-visual displays, the Museum exhibited some of the famous tablets, and huge quantities of the leather shoes that had been found at Vindolanda. Some of them were exquisitely made. I resolved to wear Roman style sandals this summer.

**Day 4**

On our last day the sites we visited were fairly near our hotel. We started with Housesteads Roman Fort. This one is famous for its Roman loos. On several sites we had been able to see the Roman systems for collecting and storing rainwater; here the water was channelled through the loos and then down the hillside.



In the afternoon we saw Milecastle 48 which had a bread oven built in to the wall. There must surely have been more bread ovens originally in other places along the Wall, but this is the only one we saw.

Finally, we walked along the wall, looking for phallic symbols and dodging cow poo. Such are the delights of Hadrian's Wall!

**Return home**

I returned home with a bag full of guide books to read. I will do that with pleasure. I am so glad that I have had a chance to begin to learn about Hadrian's amazing undertaking to fortify the Frontiers of the Roman Empire.

*(Below is a picture of Dr Nick Hodgson - right, with a group of 'Friends')*



## FBRV LECTURE SERIES: 28th AUGUST 2019



### Hoards Hidden History



Every so often a remarkable discovery hits the headlines - an account of treasure hunters striking lucky after years of searching the land, or perhaps a chance find made by a farmer after ploughing. With each new hoard comes a story, or a number of possible stories and unanswered questions. Who did it belong to? Why was it buried or lost and not recovered?

**Eleanor Ghey**, curator of the British Museum and Salisbury Museum partnership exhibition *Hoards: A Hidden History of Britain*, will be at Brading Roman Villa to discuss the practice of hoarding, including why the British Museum and Salisbury Museum collaborated on the current exhibition. The talk will include details of some hoards featured in the Exhibition as well as how they were discovered. The exhibition has been generously supported by the Dorset Foundation.



Wednesday 28th August at 4.30 pm  
Brading Roman Villa

Ticket Prices:  
£6 Friends of Brading Roman Villa  
£7 non-Friends

Tickets available at Brading Roman Villa

All proceeds will be used to help support Brading Roman Villa

*Please Note: payment in cash or cheque, FBRV cannot process card payments.  
Booking is essential. Tickets can be reserved but must be paid for within 48 hours.  
Tickets not paid for may be released for sale if not claimed 30 minutes before the start time.  
Tickets are Non-Refundable.*

Main image: Two ceramic pots of silver Roman coins found near Selby in Yorkshire © The Trustees of the British Museum. Images of individual coins, all belonging to hoards found on the Isle of Wight, courtesy the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

## WENDY GANNON PRESIDENT'S FUND LECTURE 2019



THE FRIENDS OF BRADING ROMAN VILLA  
Saturday 21st September 2019 at 3.30pm

**Dr Sam Moorhead**

Department of Coins and Medals

British Museum: National Finds Adviser-Iron Age and Roman Coins

**The Frome Hoard, Carausius and the First Brexit.**

**Tickets: £10.00**

Brading Roman Villa, Morton Old Road, Brading, Isle of Wight, PO36 0PH

Tel: 01983 406223. or 07775 606 812

Charity Number: 1110720

## HOARDS: A HIDDEN HISTORY OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

*Generously supported by the Dorset Foundation in memory of Harry M Weinrebe*

*By the time you read this many of you may have already visited this exhibition and been amazed and wowed by the displays. However if you have not witnessed this spectacular presentation please hurry as the exhibition closes at the end of September.*  
Ed.

Visitors are invited to discover buried treasure in *Hoard: a hidden history of ancient Britain*, a British Museum and Salisbury Museum Partnership Exhibition, generously supported by the Dorset Foundation. *Hoard* focuses on hoarding in ancient Britain, and will be on loan to Brading Roman Villa until 28th September 2019.

From Bronze weapons discovered in the river Thames and the first Iron Age coin hoards, through to hoards buried after the collapse of Roman rule in Britain, the exhibition showcases recent discoveries from the general public and reported through the Treasure Act. *Hoard* brings together objects, including the spectacular Ipswich Iron Age gold torcs along with new prehistoric and Roman finds from Wessex. The loan is complemented at Brading by the display of coins found locally in Isle of Wight hoards.

The display explores the reasons why ancient people hid precious objects underwater and in the ground over thousands of years. Objects may have been accidentally lost or stolen, discarded as worthless, saved for recycling, hidden for safekeeping or offered up to the gods. Prehistoric communities deposited hoards as part of rituals to honour gods or

ancestors, and to demonstrate power and wealth. Roman coin hoards have traditionally been viewed as being hidden for safekeeping from external threats but new research is changing our understanding of these finds.. Careful study of these discoveries has revealed a wealth of information about the past.

**Joe Edwards, Dorset Foundation Head of National Programmes at the British Museum** said:

“bringing this exhibition to the Isle of Wight allows a whole new pool of visitors the opportunity to see these fascinating objects, a number of which have been found by members of the public. The British Museum is delighted to be working once again with Brading Roman Villa, with its fantastic mosaics and archaeology collection, which will provide an excellent context to how some of the Roman Britons who buried these hoards might have lived.”

**Jasmine Wroath, Curator of Brading Roman Villa** said:

“The *Hoard* exhibition is a great opportunity to show the importance of our local finds within the context of national discoveries. People have discovered artefacts from all over the island and recorded these finds through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, which enables us to keep track of these valuable discoveries. It’s exciting to keep adding to what we know about ancient people living on the Isle of Wight and try to understand why they buried what they believed to be valuable and worth hiding.”



# Forum Café

Have you tried the new **Breakfast Menu** in the Forum Café? It is well worth sampling. Among its varied delights they are now offering

### **FULL ENGLISH BREAKFAST (booking advised)**

For smaller appetites:

Teacake & Tea/Coffee  
Bacon Sandwich & Tea/Coffee  
Scrambled Egg on Toast

This menu is served from 10.00 - 11.30am every day (providing the café is open).

If you are not a breakfast person then there’s still plenty to sample - cakes, scones, lunches and don’t forget the Specials Board.

The following article is actually an advert for a new book recently published by Archaeopress publications and written by Caroline K. Mackenzie. Caroline was a Student Member of FBRV and has donated a copy of this book to our library. It looks like an interesting read. And I have it on good authority that pictures of our winter mosaic is included in the book. Ed.

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## Culture and Society at Lullingstone Roman Villa - CAROLINE K. MACKENZIE (AUTHOR)

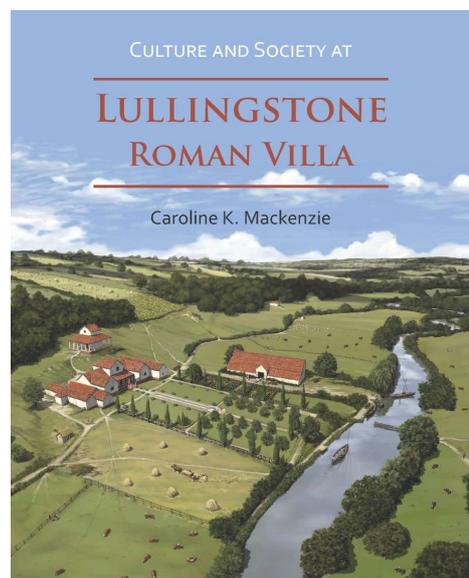
**Richly illustrated and clearly written, *Culture and Society at Lullingstone Roman Villa* articulates a thoughtful and original approach to this remarkable site. It presents extensive scholarly research in an accessible manner and is recommended reading for academics and enthusiasts alike.**

*Culture and Society at Lullingstone Roman Villa* paints a picture of what life might have been like for the inhabitants of the villa in the late third and fourth centuries AD.

The villa today, in the Darent Valley, Kent, has an unusual amount of well-preserved evidence for its interior decoration and architecture. Seventy years on from the commencement of the excavation of the site, this study draws on the original reports but also embraces innovative approaches to examining the archaeological evidence and sheds new light on our understanding of the villa's use. For the first time, the site of Lullingstone Roman Villa is surveyed holistically, developing a plausible argument that the inhabitants used domestic space to assert their status and cultural identity.

An exploration of the landscape setting asks whether property location was as important a factor in the time of Roman Britain as it is today and probes the motives of the villa's architects and their client. Lullingstone's celebrated mosaics are also investigated from fresh perspective. Why were these scenes chosen and what impact did they have on various visitors to the villa? Comparison with some contemporary Romano-British villas allows us to assess whether Lullingstone is what we would expect, or whether it is exceptional. Examples from the wider Roman world are also introduced to enquire how Lullingstone's residents adopted Roman architecture and potentially the social customs which accompanied it.

Publication date: Jul 2019 —Format: Paperback  
Price: £14.99 ISBN: 9781789692907



### CONTRIBUTOR

**Caroline K. Mackenzie** read Classics at Pembroke College, Cambridge. After Cambridge, she continued her studies at law school where she was awarded a distinction and then practised as a Private Client solicitor in London for over a decade.

Caroline subsequently pursued a teaching career, first as a law lecturer and then as Head of Classics at a preparatory school in Sevenoaks, Kent. In 2018 Caroline was awarded a Master of Arts with distinction in Classical Art and Archaeology at King's College London.

Caroline teaches and leads a variety of courses on Latin and Greek, and on Classical Art and Archaeology; she has lectured for English Heritage who invited her to deliver a study day including a private tour of Lullingstone Roman Villa.



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## COMING SOON

<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
21st	3.30pm	Talk by : Sam Moorhead - <b>The Frome Hoard, Carausius and the First Brexit.</b> (£10.00)
28th	7.00pm	Cinema - <b>RED JOAN</b> (£5.00)
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
23rd		Day trip to the Ashmolean Museum Oxford to visit the new exhibition: <b>THE LAST SUPPER IN POMPEII</b> (Details on website).
26th	7.00pm	Cinema - <b>ROCKETMAN</b> (£5.00)
<b>NOVEMBER</b>		
30th	7.00pm	Cinema - <b>YESTERDAY</b> (£5.00)
<b>DECEMBER</b>		
28th	7.00pm	Cinema— <b>FISHERMAN'S FRIENDS</b> (£10.00 INC. buffet)
<b>2020</b>		
<b>FEBRUARY</b>		
1st	2.30pm	Talk by : <b>Stewart White, Trustee of Antinoupolis, the City dedicated by Hadrian to Antinous</b>
<b>MARCH</b>		
7th	3.30pm	<b>FBRV Annual General Meeting</b>



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