

# KAFS Newsletter: No.10.

The Kent Archaeological Field School: Winter 2016

Have you seen  
the KAFS website?  
It is amazing...



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KAFS MEMBERSHIP FORM



Dear Member, we will be sending a Newsletter email each quarter to keep you up to date with news and views on what is planned at the Kent Archaeological Field School and what is happening on the larger stage of archaeology both in this country and abroad. For more details of courses and trips see [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk). I do hope you enjoy this newsletter which looks forward to a summer of exciting 'digging' opportunities. Paul Wilkinson.

### Breaking News: English Heritage - saving English Heritage

Richard Morrison writing in the arts column of the London Times:



'After 237 years it still looks magnificent. Iron Bridge spans the Severn in one audacious 378-tonne leap of cast iron. Its architect, Thomas Pritchard, didn't live to see his revolutionary design realised, but Abraham Darby III — grandson of the man who ignited the Industrial Revolution by smelting iron ore with coke a few miles upriver at Coalbrookdale — saw the project through. Iron Bridge became a world-famous advertisement for the ingenuity of the Shropshire ironmasters.

It appears sturdy enough to last a thousand years, and one hopes it will — but looks can be deceptive. Darby's workmen were carpenters applying carpentry techniques to fix an iron bridge in place because they knew no other way. Those old joints are starting to give way. The gorge itself has narrowed over the centuries — only by a few centimetres, but enough to squeeze the hump of the structure upwards. And the Severn seems to flood more and more with each decade, adding to the corrosion.

Conserving this iconic structure will cost £1.25 million and take several years. English Heritage announced yesterday that it is embarking on this critical project. In fact, preliminary work has begun. Computer imaging has already revealed potential stress points — in the event of a once-in- 500-years storm, for instance. On Monday [22.02.2016] I watched an intrepid engineer lower himself off the side of the bridge on a harness to inspect its underbelly. By next year the whole structure will be covered in scaffold — itself quite a feat of engineering — and the restoration will be fully under way.

It marks a symbolic moment in the history of English Heritage. Last April the government split the organisation in half. The planning and advisory inspectorate (responsible for the listing of important buildings, among other things) was hived off as Historic England. Meanwhile, all of the 400- plus properties — from castles and stately homes to industrial sites — were given to the newly created English Heritage Trust. So was a one off grant of £80 million, with the proviso that after eight years this charitable trust would become self-supporting. Of that grant, £52 million was earmarked to tackle the backlog of major repairs to EH's sites. Each region has chosen one major site for restoration: Iron Bridge is the west's choice; Hadrian's Wall is the north's. However, the money is also being spread round less expensive projects.

On Monday, not far from Iron Bridge, I watched one such restoration in progress, at the amazing Boscobel House. This country house is fascinating for two reasons. First, it had a famous brush with English Civil War history: the future Charles II hid there from Cromwell's soldiers, initially in an oak tree in its grounds (the original

Royal Oak), then in a priest-hole under the attic floor. And second, it has a remarkably multifaceted architectural history.

Although dating from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was extensively rebuilt (with a new farmyard) by a wealthy industrialist in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

That makes conservation a complex matter. Do you use the techniques and materials of the Jacobean era or the Victorian? If you strip off plaster to get to rotten timbers, do you restore what Charles II may have seen or the Victorians' idea of "mock-Tudor"?

Such dilemmas make Boscobel House a perfect project for the second part of EH's current mission: to use its £52 million not just to repair buildings but to train a new generation of restorers to use traditional skills and materials. We have never had more knowledge about how our ancestors built their castles, houses, shops, bridges and factories, but we are dangerously short of people with the practical skills to apply that expertise.

EH is determined to build up a new in-house team of expert craftspeople, I shall follow its restoration projects with interest. This is a once-in-a lifetime opportunity to preserve our historic sites for our grandchildren's grandchildren. Just as important for EH, however, is the need to raise its profile so that come 2023 it will flourish as an independent trust. In 2015 a record 5.7 million people visited its staffed sites and it recruited 270,000 new members — edging its total membership ever closer to the coveted million mark. That's excellent news. If English heritage is to survive, so must English Heritage'.

#### **Richard Morrison**



### **Breaking News/2: Oplontis excavation opportunities**

The Oplontis Project began in 2006 with the study of the site known as Oplontis situated at Torre Annunziata, Italy. The work is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Ancient Italy at the University of Texas in Austin. Its two directors are John

R. Clarke and Michael L. Thomas. In addition the Kent Archaeological Field School, Faversham, Kent UK under its director Dr Paul Wilkinson has been involved in fieldwork at both villa sites since 2008.



The aims of the project are to enable an understanding of the two buildings, one of which is Villa 'A', the other Villa 'B' to be enhanced through a comprehensive study of the buildings, the fabric, the artefacts and human remains, their location, and their function including a 3-d model (above) with interactive database which will enable scholars to write a series of comprehensive volumes which will be published by the Humanities eBook series of the American Council of Learned Societies. The first is scheduled to appear in 2014.

Villa 'A' is now recognised as one of the most sumptuous and extravagant Roman villas overlooking the Bay of Naples. It is thought by many that the villa was the property of Poppaea Sabina the Younger who was born in Pompeii in AD30 and married Nero in AD62. The evidence is somewhat circumstantial and consists of graffiti found on an amphora which said '*secundo poppaea*' which in translation means 'to the second [slave or freedman] of Poppaea'.

The villa was excavated by an Italian team over twenty years ago, and although it was impossible because of modern development to find the limits of the villa some 99 rooms and spaces were excavated including a sixty metre swimming pool and formal gardens. The villa is probably best known for its wonderful Second Style wall frescoes which can be found in a number of rooms located around the atrium, itself dating back to about 50BC.

Villa 'B' is located about 300 metres to the east of Villa 'A' and is not a villa. Its likely function was a warehouse where wine would be processed and shipped out in amphorae. Some 400 amphorae still litter the site. Around the warehouse are roads and streets of town houses still waiting to be excavated.

The plan of the warehouse is focused on a central courtyard surrounded by a two-storey peristyle of Nocera tufa columns. The eastern side of the peristyle includes an entrance opening onto an unexcavated road running north south and detected through our coring campaign. Ground floor storage rooms open up into this central space whilst above on the second floor are residential rooms. To the south lies the remains of a colonnade and portico and, set back, a series of large barrel vaulted

storage rooms which faced the sea. In these rooms, just as in the Roman port area of Herculaneum, dozens of skeletons were found of people waiting to be rescued by boat from the eruption of Vesuvius in AD79.



In 2008 I was invited by John Clarke to join the team and started work on site at Villa 'A' helping with a small evaluation trench located in the southern area of the large swimming pool. One of its aims was to attempt to date the adjacent foundation wall of Room 78, the large *diaeta* (private room) to the south-west of the swimming pool. We excavated through demolition layers of Roman material which included fragments of exquisite fresco, painted stucco fragments and, the most wonderful of all, beautiful oil lamps with a variety of designs. To an archaeologist who normally excavates Roman sites in Britain the quality and quantity of finds was staggering. The Fourth Style fresco fragments indicated a *terminus post quem* date of about 45AD for the construction of the *diaeta* (above).

The following year I returned to Oplontis with a small team from the Kent Archaeological Field School (KAFS) and a Landover full of archaeological kit. The drive from Kent, through France, across the Alps and down the spine of Italy was memorable and is something I still look forward to every year. In a way it is a drive through a historic landscape, and gives one a feel of how extremes and opportunities of landscape moulded the lives of past peoples. The 2009 season was busy and eight trenches were excavated at Villa 'A'. In addition Giovanni Di Maio who had already undertaken some work on the geological formations below the villa cored three additional areas to the south of the villa and proved that Villa 'A' was situated on a cliff about 13 metres above the Roman sea level. Our work in 2009 included a test pit dug through the north-west corner of the pool. We found that the pool had originally been larger and had been reduced in width presumably to allow the colonnade of porticos on the west side to be built. In addition we excavated part of a circular fountain in Room 20. It had been revealed by workmen laying cables in 2007 and not recorded. On investigation we found a partly demolished fountain buried under a metre of demolition debris. The fountain had quite a pronounced tilt

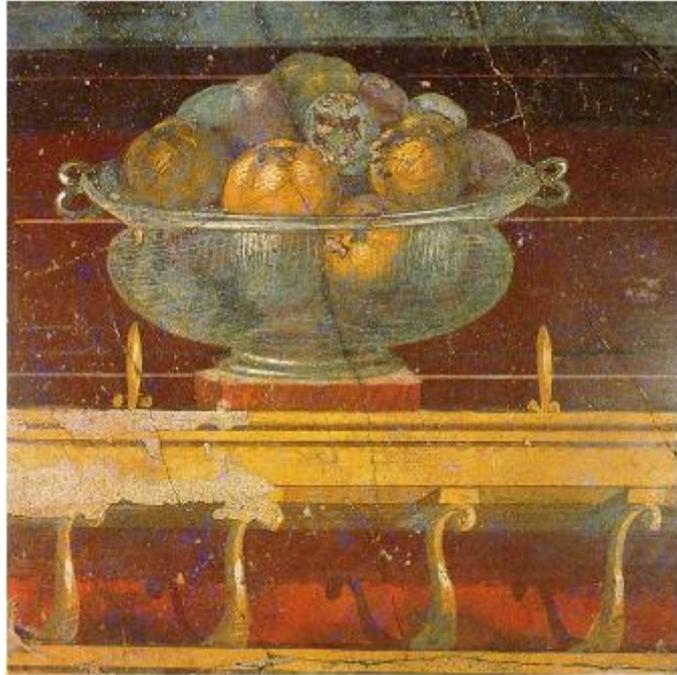
to it which might suggest Villa 'A' had been subjected to serious earthquake damage in the years before AD79. All the piping to the fountain had been robbed, and in addition a statue which graced the south edge of the fountain was no longer there, but its concrete 'footprint' was!



Another of our trenches was located in the north-east corner of the north gardens and for once we were digging through layers of pumice deposited by the volcanic eruption of AD79. Underneath we found an open canal 80cm in width and finished in coating of *cocciopesto* (pink waterproof cement), known to archaeologists as *opus signinum*. The canal runs north with a slight curve to the east under the modern car park. The function of the aqueduct fed canal cannot be proved, but it is likely that it was an open water feature, part of an elaborate garden which went out of use in antiquity when it was backfilled with earth and debris.

Another garden we looked at was in Room 32, the peristyle in the servants quarters located to the east of the main atrium. We discovered evidence for an earlier peristyle that matched the footprint of the later build. The trench produced copious amounts of marble mosaic flooring, *opus signinum* slabs, and the exquisite marble nose from a small statue! The water features investigated in 2009 suggest that the first phase of the villa dated to about 50BC, and was seriously damaged in the earthquakes of AD62 with the water features decommissioned and either demolished or backfilled. In 2010 we excavated nine trenches with a view to unravelling the complexities of the water supply to the villa. In the south-east of the north gardens we excavated a large cistern with a capacity of about two cubic metres of water. It seems the cistern, constructed of *opus signinum*, was to prevent flooding in this part of the garden, to hold a water supply for the garden, and for use as a drain to the nearby portico that once lined the eastern side of the north garden and its adjacent room. The finds from the infill of the cistern were dazzling with large fragments of a Doric frieze constructed of super fine stucco, two types of antefixes, and part of a column constructed of wedge-shaped bricks and with stucco flutes. It was decided to excavate in the centre of the 60m swimming pool which required crowbars to remove the large basalt blocks which made up the substructure of the pool. Our daily water consumption went up from two litres a day in the shade to six litres! The reason for digging was that the ground penetrating radar had found a significant anomaly underneath the pool foundations. Unfortunately we did not find any anomaly but we did expose and record the two phases of pool construction, the eruption layers and the palaeosoils.

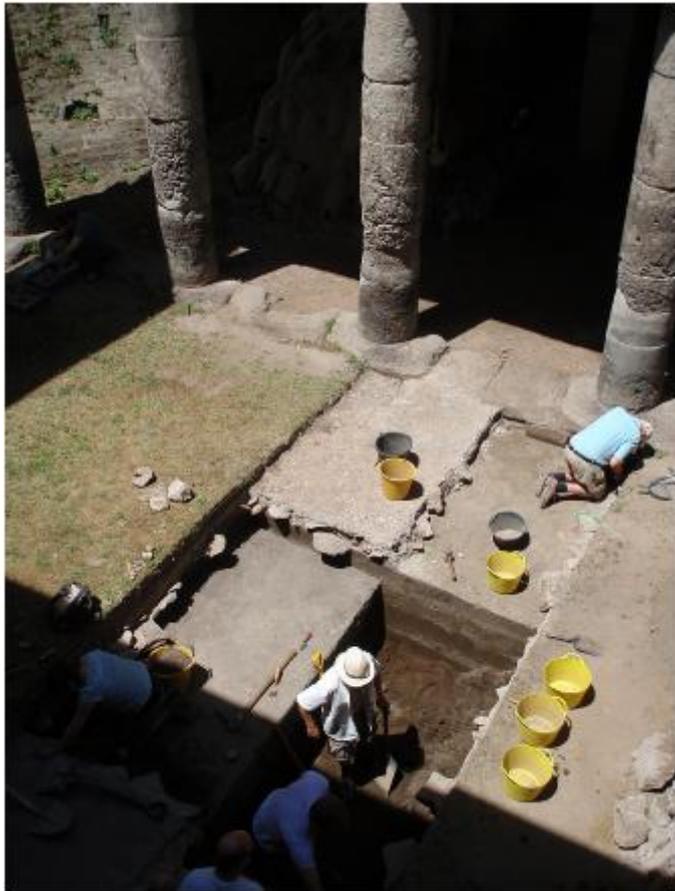
Our attention then focused on the area immediately south of the pool. Four trenches were dug that exposed a portico at the south end of the pool, part of a wonderful marble floor of *opus sectile*, a room not recorded before with marble steps and a Doric column with stucco fluting still in situ. Found on these steps were copious amounts of pottery and a large piece of marble architrave with part of an acanthus scroll or volute (opening picture).



Our work at Villa A has gathered additional evidence that after the earthquake of AD62 large areas of the villa were badly damaged. The finding of part of a column drum from the adjacent east wing in the cistern, the lifting of part of the *opus sectile* floor prior to the eruption of AD79, and the remodelling of the swimming pool suggest that major re-building work was being undertaken. The villa also had problems with its water supply which may suggest that the villa was not habitable at the time of the eruption in AD79.

### **Excavation in Villa B (above)**

Initial GPR work had detected a series of anomalies that suggested the presence of earlier structures under the present exposed buildings. In particular the investigation suggested that the complex lay just a few metres from the ancient shoreline. The wider settlement may have been a small town (Oplontis) or a commercial harbour serving the Pompeian countryside, and will be the first of its kind discovered in the Bay of Naples area.



Work started in 2012 in the courtyard area with the aim of exposing the stratigraphy, and to examine the foundations of the building which may produce evidence of its function and chronology. We expanded the trench to the entire width of the courtyard and soon had to resort to crowbars as the original surface of the courtyard comprised large and occasionally very large basalt boulders with the gaps between boulders infilled with large sherds of amphorae. Some of these still retained residue which were bagged for analysis.

Immediately under the basalt pavement was the first of many pyroclastic flows, the first dating to the Late Bronze Age. As we excavated down we exposed and recorded sequence after sequence of eruption strata and palaeosoils dating as far back as 1500-1600BC. Some of these surfaces had carted or sled ruts along with pottery sherds and remains of mud bricks. The lowest strata were littered with Bronze Age artefacts, and suggest there was a high level of Bronze Age activity in the environs of Oplontis B.

Both ends of the trench gave an opportunity to investigate the foundation design of the colonnade which was unusual to say the least. A thick tufa stylobate sits on top of foundation blocks (sterobate) spaced to coincide with the joins between the blocks of the stylobate with the entire assemblage sitting on the same pyroclastic stratum which we found under the basalt paved courtyard. Sherds of Campania A Black Gloss pottery found in the foundation trench date the build of this colonnade to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC.

In 2013 we returned to this area and expanded the trench to expose a complex water system with a settling tank plus two water channels and various drains. Of some importance is the fact that this complex water system cut through two previous floor levels which suggests the function of the building may have changed through time. Another team undertook the task of removing tons of modern debris in the area of the south portico. A thankless task undertaken in the glare of the Italian sun! But well rewarded by exposing layers of volcanic debris from the eruption of

AD79. Underneath this layer we found the original floor surface with numerous Neronian and Flavian coins. Below that a complex of barrel vaulted drains was exposed which will need further investigation. Our final investigation was to examine part of the street north of the main complex. Originally excavated by the Italian team in the 1980's, who discovered a street running east to west lined on both sides with simple town houses on both sides, it is apparent that these houses have ground floor rooms, some with the foundation step of a staircase leading to upstairs rooms, and some of which have a simple shrine dedicated to the household gods. Our investigation showed that some areas of the ground floor still retained debris from the AD79 eruption and had not been excavated. Underneath we found a simple beaten earth floor, the step for a staircase, a toilet and washing area and probably a kitchen area. The road outside the house was also excavated and showed it had two construction phases which may correspond to the two identified phases of the adjacent building, the first probably dating to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC when the building were probably used as workshops with a wide entrance, and the second phase when the entrance was narrowed and the building turned into domestic quarters. Indeed, three houses show walled up entrances, it now became a typical Roman street that included stone benches outside of each entrance.

We will be back in Oplontis in June 2016 for another season of excavation and anyone can join our team. The only criteria is that you are a member of the Kent Archaeological Field School [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk) and that you have some experience or enthusiasm for Roman archaeology, Italian food and Italian sunshine! See also the website for the project at [www.oplontisproject.org](http://www.oplontisproject.org).

**Paul Wilkinson**



### **Breaking News/3: Fatal car crash leads to recovery of treasures from Paestum**

Five precious frescoes dating from 300BC that were stolen in Italy by tomb raiders have been recovered after an investigation triggered by the death of an artefacts trafficker in a car crash.

The stones were ripped off a tomb wall by thieves at Paestum in southern Italy and stolen before experts even knew of their existence.



That changed in 1995 when Pasquale Camera, a trafficker known as The Captain, was killed when he drove his car off the road and smashed into a barrier near Naples after a heavy lunch.

Police going through the belongings in his wrecked car stumbled upon hundreds of photos of stolen artefacts, before finding even more, as well as trafficked relics, at his house. The pictures helped an anti-tomb raider squad within the Italian police to build a catalogue of trafficked works, and officers began scouring dealers' collections, eventually finding the frescoed slabs after a decade long search.

Mariano Mossa, a police official, said yesterday that the frescoes had been bought "in good faith" by a Swiss collector for €1 million (£700,000). Decorated with images of a warrior with his war booty being welcomed home by a noble lady and her slave girls, the frescoes hailed from an unknown tomb at Paestum, south of Naples, which is home to three well preserved Ancient Greek temples.

Each slab has a crack down the middle, after being cut in half to make them easier to smuggle. Gabriel Zuchtriegel, the director of the Paestum site, said that the frescoes gave a valuable idea of the "life of an aristocrat in the 4th century BC". He added that the location of the tomb from which the slabs had been torn remained unknown because of the clandestine work of tomb raiders, which he called "devastating for archaeology".

"Just how much patrimony have we lost to the illicit collectors' market?" he asked. The frescoes, which were retrieved earlier this year from the Swiss collector, will be returned to Paestum for display to the public in January 2016.

Tomb raiders in Italy have regularly been accused of discovering and emptying tombs before experts get them. The country regularly throws up previously unknown subterranean treasures.

This week, workers repairing a gas main under a busy Rome street stumbled into an underground cavity containing the wall of a first-century Roman villa decorated with floral frescoes in red, green and purple.

**Tom Kington writing in the London Times**



## **Breaking News/4: The sunken palace of Julius Caesar was built with imported marbles**

Matt Atherton writes:

'The very best of ancient Rome's marble came from Turkey, Greece and other parts of Italy itself, say researchers from the Spanish Foundation for Science and Technology. Underwater excavation showed that the city of Baia - where Roman emperors would spend their summers - only used the highest quality marble available, indicating its importance across the empire.

This submerged city once housed villas owned by famous emperors including Julius Caesar, Augustus and Nero between the 1st Century BC and 3rd Century AD, and was used as a summer haven. It was known for its large swimming pools, Roman baths, and its deep underground channels that made entire rooms act as saunas.

Over the years, the city has gradually been forced underwater due to local volcanic activity wearing away the coast. The old Roman ruins are now five metres underwater.

The white marble from these underwater villas was tested by experts, and the results were published in the journal Applied Surface Science. They discovered the highly valuable rock, which was used to decorate the villas of Baia, came from quarries in Carrara in Italy, Thassos, Paros and Pentelikon in Greece, and Proconnesos, Docimium and Aphrodisias in Turkey.

"When working with built cultural heritage, it is important to know where the marble originated so that its deterioration compared to reference materials can be determined," said Monica Alvarez de Buergo, a researcher working on the study.

"The variety and quality of the marble identified highlight the importance held by this area in the past seeing as it yielded the best ornamental marble of that time period, and this helps to determine the trade routes that were used at that point in time during the Roman Empire."



In order to find the results, the researchers had to scuba suit-up, and carry out their research in the underwater archaeological site in Baia.

When excavating, the archaeologists collected 50 samples of marble, all measuring no more than a few centimetres long. The samples were then taken back to the lab for chemical analysis.

Four different stages of examination were used on the marble. "First, thin layers of the collected marble were observed using a petrographic microscope," said Alvarez de Buergo. "Then, the mineral composition of the marble was studied using X-ray diffraction and the manganese content was determined (with Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry). Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM) was then carried out and various isotopes were analysed."

The results showed that the marble came from seven of the most valuable quarries across Italy, Turkey and Greece. Just five of the 50 samples tested could not be identified. White marble was used extensively across the Roman Empire for decoration of buildings and statues. As times progressed, coloured marble was also used - symbolising the country it originated from - for example, purple marble came from Egypt.

## **Breaking News/5: Roman technology heats Bath Abbey**

Simon de Bruxelles writing in the London Times:

'One of the things the Romans did do for us is about to deliver a dividend for a historic church. For more than 500 years Bath Abbey has been sitting virtually on top of a vast untapped energy resource.

Every day about 1,173,000 litres of water from one of Britain's only hot springs pours through a 1,800-year-old Roman drain into the River Avon.

Engineers have begun work to use the wasted water to heat the abbey and the adjacent Pump Room, one of Bath's most popular visitor attractions. The free energy will save the abbey at least £30,000 a year in



heating oil, meaning worshippers will no longer have to wear heavy overcoats and hats when the Victorian central heating fails to cope with winter chills.

Excavations have begun in the precincts beside the abbey to establish the best location for a heat exchanger that will transform spring water into underfloor heating. The water emerges at a constant 46C (U5F) from four springs in the city centre and fills the Roman baths and the modern spa. The overflow will generate 1.5 megawatts of energy, enough to heat both abbey and the Pump Room.

The 400m-long drain was extended in Georgian times, when the course of the Avon was altered, but is otherwise untouched and has been in constant use since it was built. Treasures dropped down the drain in Roman times were discovered when it was excavated in the Seventies, including 34 engraved gemstones known as intaglios and a mysterious tin mask.

The new excavations are already exciting archaeologists. Until digging began last month it was thought the area around the abbey had been thoroughly explored, but engineers found that at least one of the sites they are looking at had never been disturbed.

What remains of the Roman bath is many metres below street level and the untouched area is between two buried walls from an unknown building, five to six metres apart, that date back to at least the 16th century but could be much older.

They are likely to be sitting on top of part of the original bath complex.

The work to use the springs to heat the abbey is part of the £19.3 million Footprint Project funded with a contribution of £10 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund. According to Charles Curnock, the Footprint director, it is the largest current project in the Church of England after the restoration of York Minster.

"The Abbey's Victorian heating system is sadly outdated, inefficient and expensive to maintain. This innovative thermal heating scheme using Bath's hot springs ticks all the right boxes, while providing a sustainable and eco-friendly solution," he said. Fundraising began when the abbey's floor started to collapse two years ago. Many as 6,000 former residents of Bath are buried beneath the building and the cavities created by their decomposing bodies caused major subsidence. Attempts by Victorian engineers to fill in the space using the crushed bones only made matters worse.

The hot springs had drawn visitors Bath long before the Romans renamed the city Aquae Sulis. The abbey was the last Britain's great medieval churches to be built—work began in 1499 on the site of ruined Norman monastery. Stephen Bird, head of heritage services for Bath and North East Somerset council, which owns the Roman Baths and the Pump Room complex, said: "The supply water from the hot spring is large but it not infinite. In 1815 a man called Pinch a borehole which struck hot water

and the supply to the baths dried up. It didn't take long for labourers to be sent round with barrows full of sand to fill it in again." The project is scheduled to be completed by 2018. Mr Bird said: "It's no surprise that this has really captured the public's imagination — it's an innovative project potentially using Bath's famous hot springs to harness natural energy in order to heat two of Bath's famous landmarks."

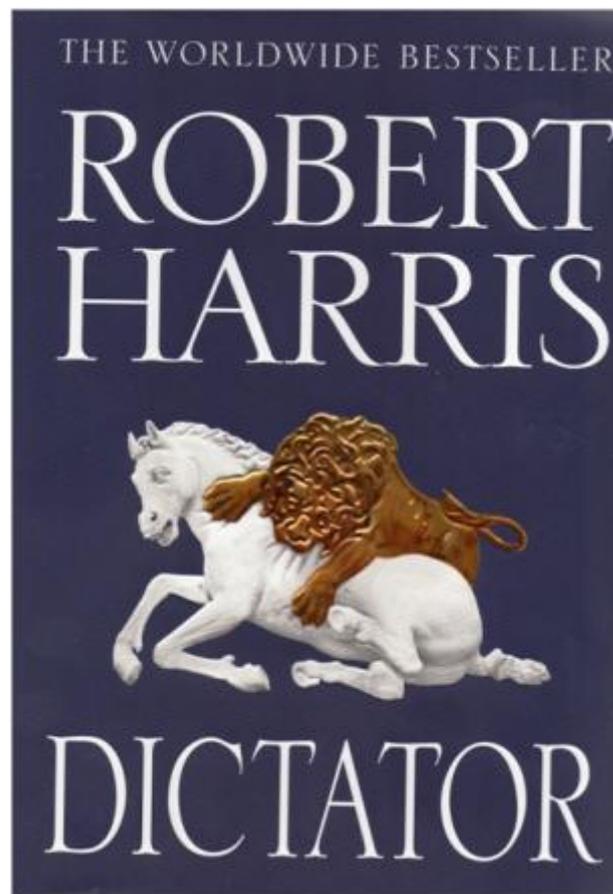
## Book of the Month is:

Not 'SPQR' by Mary Beard but 'Dictator' by Robert Harris

A straw poll of members of the KAFS nudged 'Dictator' into first place.

Edith Hall of the London Times reports:

'Robert Harris was an influential journalist and BBC reporter before he turned to writing fiction. His close friends have included Peter Mandelson and Roy Jenkins, and most of his ancient Roman politicians resemble figures in contemporary British politics.'



He has a pitch-perfect ear for class snobbery, hypocrisy, parliamentary posturing and bluster. His best episodes bring crucial behind-the-scenes moments in Roman political skulduggery to colourful life. He writes with swaggering confidence.

*Dictator* is his ninth historical novel. It is also the third novel in a trilogy set in the mid-first century BC, centring on the Roman orator Cicero. The trilogy is narrated by Cicero's slave and secretary, Tiro, the inventor of our modern system of shorthand, whom Cicero rewarded with emancipation. *Imperium*, the first novel in the trilogy, began with Cicero launching his career as a public figure by prosecuting the corrupt governor of Sicily; in the second, *Lustrum*, Cicero became consul and was hounded into exile by the sneering, arrogant aristocrat Publius Clodius Pulcher. In this final instalment, which begins in 58BC, Cicero returns from exile. It ends shortly after his

brutal execution in 43BC, when his name was put on the hit list comprising everybody who opposed the authority of the ruthless Second Triumvirate (Antony, Octavian and Lepidus).

*Dictator* is climactic in every sense: loyal readers have now been waiting for nearly a decade to discover how Harris would deal with the most famous moment in Roman history, when the Republic staggered to its gory finale with the assassination of Julius Caesar. Harris does not disappoint. His Caesar is a menacing, genocidal psychopath, but so charismatic that everyone in Rome, including Brutus and the other assassins, is left strangely bereft in the days of eerie crisis following the Ides of March in 44BC.

There are, however, profound weaknesses in Harris's writing. He fails to exploit the possibilities inherent in using Tiro as a narrator: even the best treated slave would surely have occasionally become irritated with such a demanding, inconsistent and egotistical owner as Cicero. The political analysis is often crude, as when Harris makes Cicero ask ponderous questions straight off an undergraduate ancient history exam ("Can a constitution devised centuries ago to replace a monarchy, and based on a citizens' militia, possibly hope to run an empire whose scope is beyond anything ever dreamed by its framers?"). Harris has superficially absorbed a commendable range of ancient sources, from Cicero's own huge oeuvre (letters, speeches, philosophical treatises) to Caesar's *Commentaries* and Plutarch's *Lives*. But for a political journalist, he adopts the agendas of the ancient writers with startling naivety. He reproduces, without a trace of cynicism, the most salacious ancient propaganda – for example, that Caesar was addicted to depilatory treatments.

The uncritical reading of ancient authors is clearest in his characterisation of famous females. Terentia, Cicero's wife, is the shrewish snob ancient men said she was; Clodia is a treacherous vamp. Did Harris ever stop to ask whether Cleopatra's alleged hyper-sexuality was an unpleasant product of Augustus's propaganda machine, before he made Tiro recall that she "had huge charcoal-black eyes and a painted ruby mouth - an aged slattern's mask even at the age of eleven"? He is on record as liking to write "at a gallop", and as having an aversion to any form of revision or refinement of the first draft of his novels. This often shows. A bit of revision might have improved his trite description of some senators "having forsaken the sun of Campania to bask in the warmest sun of all: power". He could be awarded a prize for the most cliched literary account of a death, when Cicero's beloved daughter Tullia expires: "a long sigh, accompanied by a slight tremor along the length of her body, and then a 'profound stillness as she passed into eternity'".

Despite its manifold faults, I enjoyed *Dictator* enormously. Harris loves Cicero - like the author, he was a self made man from a relatively humble background - and communicates his own fascination with the epic showdown that constituted the fall of the Roman Republic. *Dictator* may be a sensational political thriller rather than serious documentary fiction, but it is often funny and touching. I could not put it down'.

Edith Hall's *Introducing the Ancient Greeks* is published by Bodley Head.

**Research News:** Aerial survey of Kent. Paul Wilkinson reports on a research project by the Kent Archaeological Field School

'If you are studying the development of the landscape in an area, almost any air photograph is likely to contain a useful piece of information'  
(*Interpreting the Landscape from the Air*, Mick Aston, 2002).

Students of the KAFS have started a two year programme of collating Google Earth

aerial photographs from 1940 to 2013 to enable focused information which can then be followed up by ground survey. The fruitfulness of this can be appreciated by the work of the field school along Watling Street in North Kent where hundreds of important archaeological sites have been identified. The ultimate aim is to publish the results online. Aerial photography is one of the most important remote sensing tools available to archaeologists.

Other remote sensing devices that will be used are satellite imagery and geophysics. All of this information can be combined and processed through computers, and the methodology is known as Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

A new addition to the survey palette is the recent availability of Lidar images (Light Detection and Ranging) some say invented by the Germans to discover Russian tanks hiding in the forests close to Germany's borders...

Typical image created by Lidar of..... (first right answer wins a prize)



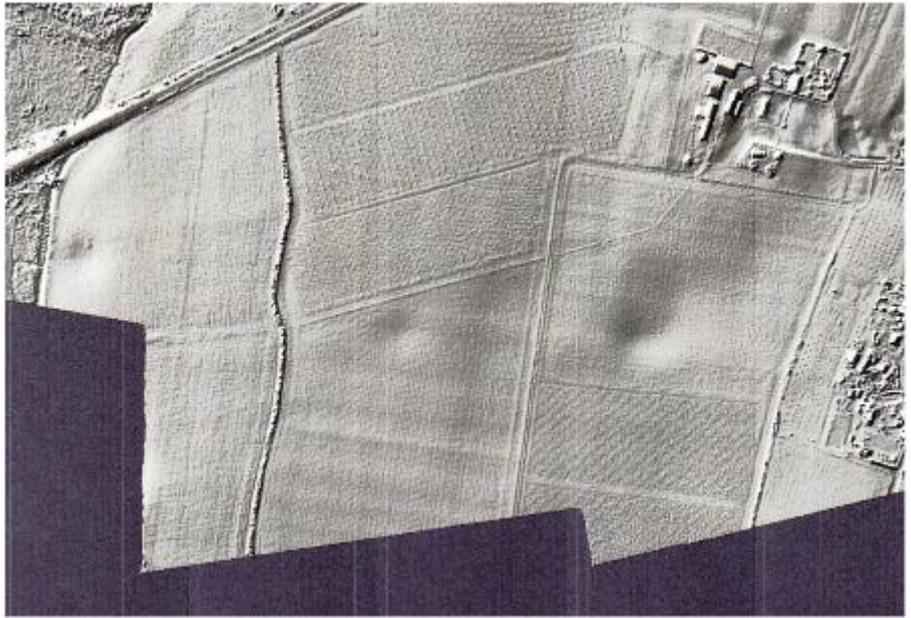
Lidar image of salt mounds at Graveney (TR 06017 63483) showing the attached parcels of salt marsh. In addition the road to the huge mound –maybe artificial- which dominated the Graveney Marshes.



Lidar image of Graveney (TR 04630 622888) which shows an enclosure with Roman pottery on the ancient shores of the Swale (red arrow).



Lidar image of the Island of Elmley (TQ 9336267264). Note the circular ditched enclosure and causeway across the Swale estuary in Kent with a shipwreck to the east. The intertidal area just to the west of the south causeway (the rectangular enclosure) has produced masses of Roman pottery.

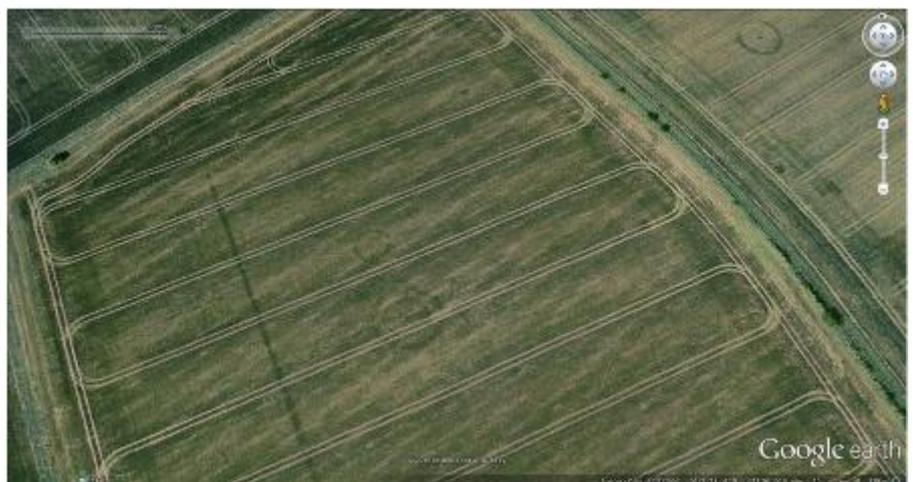


Lidar image of Blacklands east of Faversham (TR 037586150). The red arrow points to a Roman religious centre overlooking springs with a theatre cut into the hillside and surrounded by 19 Roman buildings- some with full colour pictorial mosaics. Of interest is the parallel relict field boundaries spaced at 10 Roman Actus (355m)

And for some more usual Google Earth images from Kent



AP 1357/07



AP 45768/07



AP 65980/07



AP 21467/07

## **Courses at the Kent Archaeological Field School for 2016 include:**

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### ***May Bank Holiday Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April to Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016: An Introduction to Archaeological Survey***

On this Bank Holiday weekend for we shall look at the ways in which archaeological sites are recorded including standing buildings. Scale metric drawing will be the main theme of the course but will also include optical site level work. On the Sunday you will have the opportunity to survey an impressive Roman and Anglo-Saxon sacred building at Stone Chapel just to the west of Faversham Cost £50 for the weekend.



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***May 30<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup> 2016 excavating at 'Villa B' at Oplontis next to Pompeii in Italy***

We will be spending three weeks in association with the University of Texas investigating the Roman Emporium (Villa B) at Oplontis next to Pompeii. The site offers a unique opportunity to dig on iconic World Heritage Site in Italy and is a wonderful once in a lifetime opportunity. Cost is £175 a week which does not include board or food but details of where to stay are available (Camping is 12EU a day and the adjacent hotel 50EU or Airbnb). Email Paul Wilkinson at [info@swataarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:info@swataarchaeology.co.uk) for further details



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***August 6<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> 2016. The Investigation of a substantial Roman Building at Sittingbourne in Kent***

A weekend investigating a substantial Roman building to find out its form and function. This is a newly discovered site confirmed by ground penetrating radar with tremendous potential and is one of the many Roman buildings earmarked by the Field School for further work. We have on our register a further six Roman sites in Swale District which will need similar research. Cost for the weekend £25



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***August 8<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 Training Week for Students on a Roman villa near Faversham in Kent***

It is essential that anyone thinking of digging on an archaeological site is trained in the procedures used in professional archaeology. Dr Paul Wilkinson, author of the best selling "Archaeology" book and Director of the dig, will spend five days explaining to participants the methods used in modern archaeology. A typical training day will be classroom theory in the morning (at the Field School) followed by excavation at a Roman villa near Faversham.

Topics taught each day are:

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> August: Why dig?

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> August: Excavation Techniques

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August: Site Survey

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August: Archaeological Recording

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August: Pottery identification

Saturday and Sunday (free) digging with the team

A free PDF copy of "Archaeology" 3rd Edition will be given to participants. Cost for the course is £100 if membership is taken out at the time of booking. Non-members £175. The day starts at 10am and finishes at 4.30pm. For directions to the Field School see 'Where ' on this website. For camping nearby see 'accommodation' in [www.kafs.co.uk](http://www.kafs.co.uk).

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**September 3<sup>rd</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> 2016. Investigation of Prehistoric features at Hollingbourne in Kent**

An opportunity to participate in excavating and recording prehistoric features in the landscape. The week is to be spent in excavating Bronze and Iron Age features located with aerial photography and Geophysical survey. Cost is £10 a day with membership.



## **KAFS BOOKING FORM**

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You can download the KAFS booking form for all of our forthcoming courses directly from our website, or [by clicking here](#)

## **KAFS MEMBERSHIP FORM**

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You can download the KAFS membership form directly from our website, or [by clicking here](#)



Kent Archaeological School School - Director: Dr Paul Wilkinson MIFA  
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If you would like to be removed from the KAFS mailing list please do so by [clicking here](#)