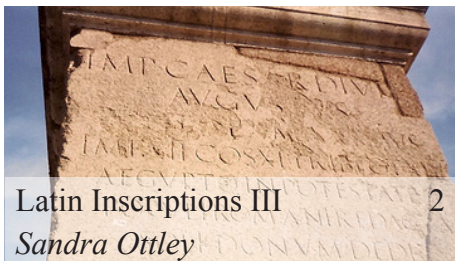


# The RAG

## IN THIS ISSUE



Latin Inscriptions III 2  
*Sandra Ottley*



Roman Pella 6  
*Rebecca Banks*



Vaison-la-Romaine, France 10  
*David Kennedy*



Celebrating the Millennium in Ancient Rome 12  
*John McDonald*

## Changes to RAG

*David Kennedy*

RAG is changing. After several years of ‘bedding-in’ the committee took stock recently of what we do and how best to proceed in future.

The two principal activities of RAG that Members see are the regular issues of this magazine and the Saturday lectures. Both were introduced at the outset and developed gradually to become fixtures. Both require a great deal of time and effort to organise and deliver – all of it voluntary by a handful of Members and friends. That has worked extremely well, reflecting enormous enthusiasm and commitment. The illness of a key player, the resignation of a committee member and my imminent departure on fieldwork and Sabbatical for several months forced us to re-think what we could sustain long-term and how we may manage the magazine and lectures in future.

For the magazine we have benefited enormously from the enthusiasm, time and talents of Kevin O’Toole who took so much care with each issue – for six years. Beginning with the current issue, the content will be solicited and edited by me with Rebecca Banks acting as technical editor turning text and illustrations into a magazine. Also starting with this issue we will in future produce RAG magazine twice a year instead of four times but each issue will be a third longer – 16 pages. This issue – 7.1, is being distributed in May and 7.2 will be sent out in November.

Six Saturday session lectures annually, each of two lectures, has proven very demanding. A handful of Members and friends have offered lectures but – as I know from my own experience, each lecture can involve at least two days of research and writing. Each of the six sessions also requires a considerable amount of logistical underpinning by a handful of key volunteers who give up much of the Saturday to be there. We don’t have a solution just yet but have decided that the Winter programme this year will consist of two Saturday sessions. The Summer sessions after Christmas may revert to three sessions.

On a different tack, a key objective of RAG is to promote Roman Archaeology through providing Travel Scholarships. For several years we have been able to offer a scholarship annually thanks to Don Boyer – who has returned as Deputy Chair. RAG income from our various activities and from donations, allowed us this month to arrange to complement the existing Travel Scholarship with a cheque to the University of WA of \$12,500 to provide a scholarship of \$2500

Continued on back page...

## Latin Inscriptions III: Obelisk of Montecitorio

*Sandra Ottley*



The Obelisk of Montecitorio standing in the Piazza di Montecitorio in Rome.

*Standing today in the Piazza di Montecitorio in Rome is an Egyptian obelisk known as the Obelisk of Montecitorio (Obelisco di Montecitorio). While not the largest of Rome's ancient obelisks (that honour belongs to the obelisk at the Lateran) it arguably has the most interesting history and the inscription on its base is important for understanding the nature of Augustan propaganda.*

It was the Roman conquest of Egypt under Augustus that made these monuments available and they were seen, especially under Augustus, as trophies to celebrate Egypt's incorporation into the Roman Empire. The Obelisk of Montecitorio is made of Aswan red granite and stands 21.79 meters high or, if we include the base and the globe on the top, 33.97 metres. This obelisk was originally erected at Heliopolis, a city located at the base of the Nile Delta in Egypt, by the Pharaoh Psammetichus II (c. 590 BC) and it was transported to Rome by the Emperor Augustus (27 BC – AD 14) in 10 BC. (A second obelisk was transported at the same time and now stands in the famous Piazza del Popolo\*). Needing to be taken down, transported down the Nile, across the Mediterranean, up the Tiber and then re-erected in Rome, the movement of this obelisk (and the others) was an incredible feat of engineering and a testament to Roman technological skill. Even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when obelisks of a similar size were removed from Egypt and transported for re-erection to Paris, London and New York, the task proved to be immensely difficult and required a considerable degree of skill.

The obelisk of Montecitorio was originally set up by Augustus on the Campus Martius where it functioned as the gnomon or pointer for Augustus' massive open air sundial (*Solarium* or *Horologium*). The sundial is described for us by Pliny the Elder (*Natural History* 37.72-73):

*The one [i.e. obelisk] in the Campus was put to use in a remarkable way by Augustus... so as to mark*

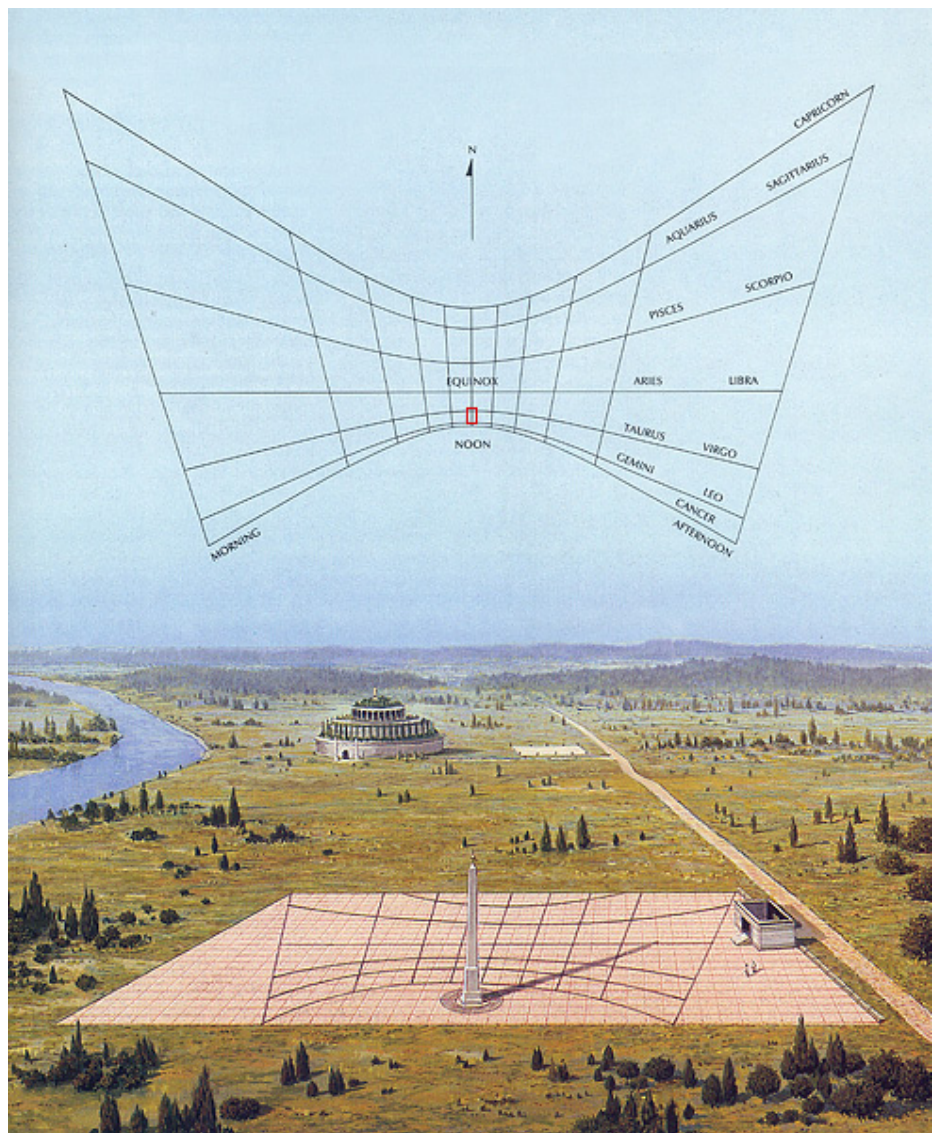
the sun's shadow and thereby the lengths of days and nights. A pavement was laid down for a distance appropriate to the height of the obelisk so that the shadow cast at noon on the shortest day of the year might exactly coincide with it. Bronze rods let into the pavement were meant to measure the shadow day by day as it gradually became shorter and then lengthened again ... He placed on the pinnacle a gilt ball, at the top of which the shadow would be concentrated, for otherwise the shadow cast by the tip of the obelisk would have lacked definition.

The sundial measured approximately 160 x 75 meters and was constructed of slabs of travertine. On these slabs quadrants were marked out with bronze letters and indicated the hours, months, seasons and signs of the zodiac. According to Pliny the original *horologium* stopped working 30 years (so by the 40s AD) after its construction.

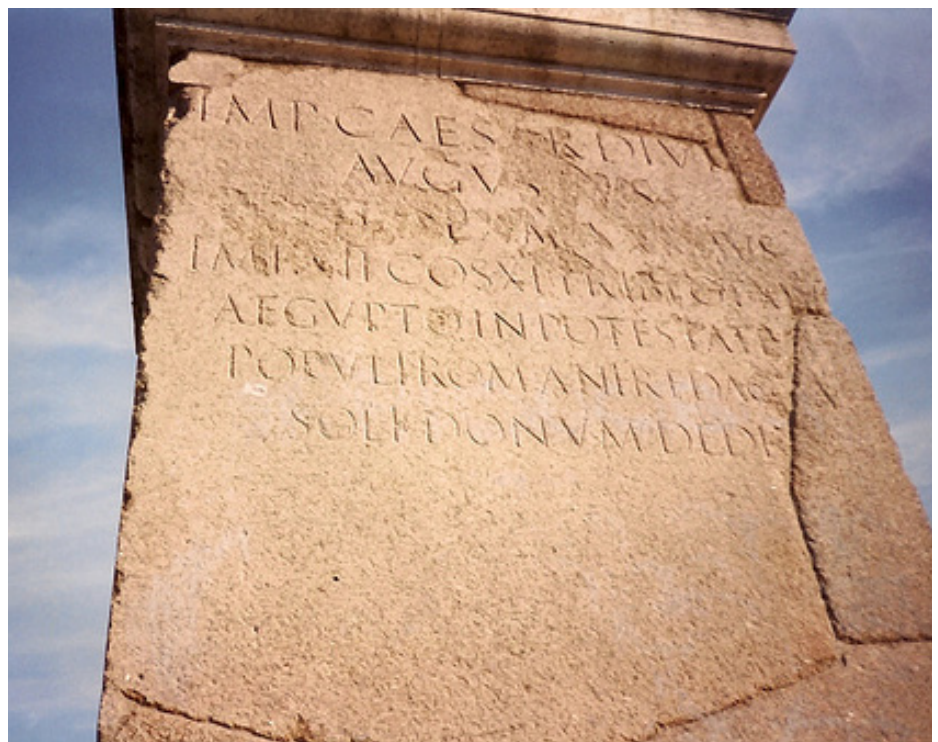
The inscription written on two sides of the obelisk's base is as follows: (The same inscription is also found on the obelisk now standing in the Piazza del Popolo).

IMP CAESAR DIVI [F]  
AVGVSTVS  
PONTIFEX MAXIMVS  
IMP XII COS XI TRIB POT XIV  
AEGVPTO IN POTESTATEM  
POPVLI ROMANI REDACT[A]  
SOLI DONVM DEDIT

The inscription is not that difficult to read and although the ability to fully understand and analyse any inscription takes many years of dedicated study, Latin inscriptions, as we have seen in previous editions of RAG (Vol. 5.3, Vol. 5.4), are usually formulaic and make considerable



A recreation of Augustus' *Heroglium* with the zodiac readings marked.



Detail of the inscription from the obelisk.



The Obelisk.

This information was designed to ‘advertise’ the greatness of the Emperor, but for us it also provides us with a useful tool to help with dating the inscription. We know from various other sources that it was on 16 January 27 BC that Augustus (then Gaius Octavianus – Julius Caesar’s nephew) formally took the name Imperator Caesar Augustus. He became Pontifex Maximus in 12 BC and was saluted Imperator for the twelfth time in 11 BC. He became Consul for the eleventh and final time on 1 January 23 BC and assumed the Tribunician Power for the fourteenth time on 1 July 10 BC. It is this final and latest date that allows us to know when the inscription and hence the obelisk was erected. This date is highly significant as it is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Augustus’ conquest of Egypt and its annexation as a Roman province. Clearly, the erection of this monument was timed by Augustus to correspond with the anniversary.

The second part of the inscription is somewhat more complicated and knowledge of the Latin language is required to read it:

**AEGVPTO** (Egypt) **IN POTESTATEM** (into the power)  
**POPVLI ROMANI** (of the Roman people) **REDACT[A]** (having been brought)  
**SOLI** (to the sun) **DONVM** (as a gift) **DEDIT** (he gave)

Therefore, the inscription reads:

*Imperator Caesar Augustus, Son of a God, Pontifex Maximus, Imperator 12 times, Consul 11 times, in his 14<sup>th</sup> year of Tribunician Power, having brought Egypt into the power of the Roman people gave this as a gift to the sun.*

Augustus, with this immense trophy from Egypt and the inscription was silently but visibly reminding the Roman people of his triumph over a land which had a long history and ancient culture. Even today this obelisk remains an impressive symbol of Augustan power.

At some point between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries AD the obelisk collapsed, and was progressively buried. Pope Sixtus V (1520 – 90) made some attempts to repair and raise the obelisk and some traces of the obelisk

use of abbreviations. Most Latin abbreviations are fortunately regular, common and ubiquitous.

First is Augustus’ name and titles:

**IMP:** standard abbreviation for Imperator

**CAESAR:** Caesar

**DIVI [F]:** ‘F’ is the common abbreviation for *filius* or son and *divi* means ‘of a god.’ So, son of a god – a very useful thing to have on your CV!

**AVGVSTVS:** Augustus

**PONTIFEX MAXIMVS:** This is often abbreviated to PM on many inscriptions.

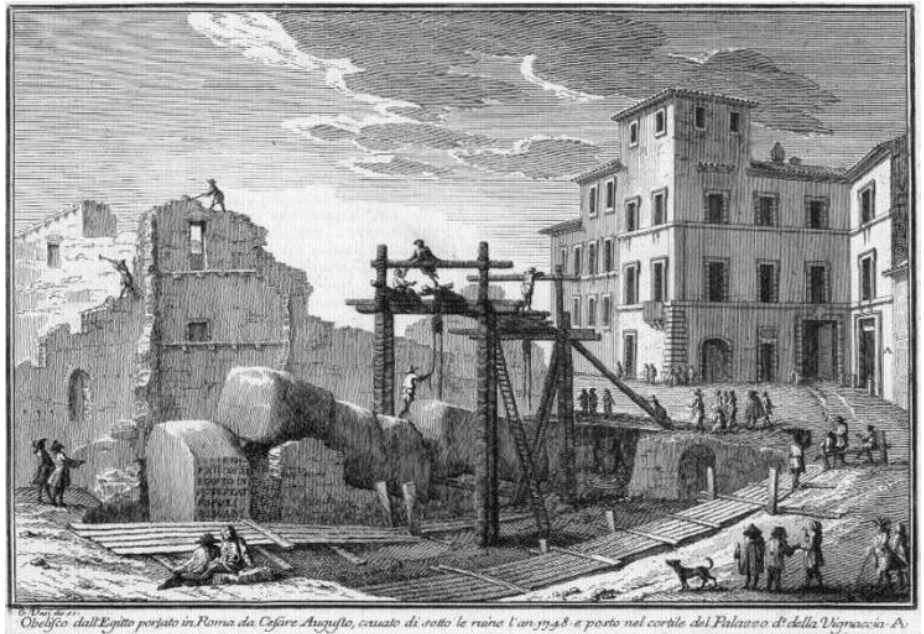
**IMP XII:** Again abbreviation for Imperator but in this case it indicates that at the time this inscription was erected Augustus had been saluted Imperator, by Roman armies operating under his auspices, 12 times.

**COS XI:** is the common abbreviation for Consul. A position he had held 11 times when the inscription was carved.

**TRIB POT XIV:** is the abbreviation for Tribunician Power – a power renewed annually so similar to regnal years. It can often be abbreviated more simply to just TP. The inscription indicates that Augustus had held the tribunician power 14 times.

were recovered in 1748 by Pope Benedict XIV, who found parts of it under the entrance of the Piazza del Parlamento. From 1789 – 92, Pope Pius VI carried out extensive restoration work and it was finally re-erected in its present location. The column's base is not original but was restored using the red Aswan granite from the Column of Antoninus Pius (AD 138 – 161).

\*The second obelisk which Augustus brought to Rome was initially located on the spina (central spine) of the Circus Maximus. It is from the 14<sup>th</sup> century BC and stands approximately 23.7 meters high. It was dug up and moved to the newly created Piazza del Popolo in 1587 by Pope Sixtus V.



Etching of Giuseppe Vasi from *Sulle magnificenze di Roma Antica e Moderna* (1752) of the erection of the Montecitorio Obelisk in Rome, 1748.

## Occasional Trivia:

### An Archaeological Discovery in the Pilbara Region

*John Melville-Jones*

A remarkable piece of rock painting has recently been discovered by geologists employed by Hamersley Iron, when they were investigating possible mining sites recently in the north-west of Western Australia. For obvious reasons, the precise location at which this discovery was made has not been publicised.

Instead of the usual human, bird or animal figures we have some perfectly preserved writing in the Roman alphabet, which reads as follows:

Olim blandus saccifer pernoctat ad fonticulum  
 Recubans sub tegmine culibai  
 Et cantavit dum exspectat, si ferret ollicula  
 'Quis vult saltare, Matilda, mecum?'

This is most interesting. Only one conclusion can properly be drawn from the inscription (which should be considered to be written in Latin of a Republican date because of the archaic form of the genitive ending in –ai that appears in the second line): some soldiers from the lost legions of Marcus Licinius Crassus (defeated and killed at Carrhae in Mesopotamia in 53 B.C.) did not end their travels in China, the furthest point which they are at the moment supposed to have reached, but must have pressed on until they came to Australia.

A further conclusion, which follows this dating of the verses, may be drawn from the second line. This must have been known in Italy by 53 B.C. or not long after. So Virgil, when he composed the first of his *Eclagues* some ten or more years later, and wrote in the second line *recubans sub tegmine fagi*, was echoing an earlier composition, which has been lost until now.

These geologists cannot have been the first European Australians to see this piece of writing. But how it came to inspire Banjo Paterson in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is something that we shall probably never know.

## Roman Pella *Rebecca Banks*



Figure 1: Aerial photograph of the central area of Pella. Photograph: David L Kennedy.  
APAAME\_20100601\_DLK-0797

*One of the first sites I had the pleasure of visiting on my recent inaugural visit to Jordan as part of David Kennedy's team on the Aerial Archaeology of Jordan Project was the ruins of Pella. The site, slightly off the beaten tourist track, struck me with its beautiful landscape and puzzling lack of easily identifiable Roman ruins. I became determined to know more and I hope this resulting article will prove helpful to orient yourself amongst the ruins if you ever have the opportunity of visiting Jordan.*

Pella is located c. 60 km (sld) north-northwest of Amman, tucked away in the hills along the eastern edge of the Jordan Valley. The ancient site stretches across three natural hills, Tell Husn, Jabal Abu el-Khas and Jabal Sartaba, and the city's tell, Khirbet Fahl. Dividing this landscape is the Wadi Jirm, the springs of which were the city's principle water source (Fig. 1). The necropolis of the city stretches out further, the ancient population entombed into the caves lining the walls of the valleys and rocky outcrops. Roman Pella grew out of the destruction of its Hellenistic predecessor, caused by a raid at the hands of the Hasmonaean ruler of Judaea, Alexander Jannaeus, in 83/82BC (recorded by the Jewish historian Josephus). This 'event' is strongly recorded on the main tell and Tell Husn, where a distinct destruction layer exists uniformly across the archaeology. It was Pompeius Magnus who liberated the region, refounded Pella as a Roman city in the province of Syria, and joined it to the conglomeration of cities known as the 'Decapolis'.

The continued habitation in this region is in part due to its geographical position on important routes: the east west route between the Decapolis cities Scythopolis (modern day Beth Shean) and Jarash (Gerasa), and the natural north-south route along the Jordan Valley. The plain north of Pella also supported a successful viticulture industry, as discovered when the Pella Hinterland Survey came across numerous wine presses.

The site's most prominent architectural remains are three tri-apsidal churches: the West, East and Civic Complex churches; the latter's partial reconstruction is prominently located beside the Wadi Jirm in what would have been the centre of the city (Fig. 2). These churches belong to the Byzantine era, when Pella reached its peak at a population estimated by some at (a highly unlikely) 25,000. The Roman remains are more elusive in the landscape. Their architectural features have been reused in later Byzantine structures, buried



Figure 2: The Civic Complex of Pella situated beside the Wadi Jirm. Photograph: Stafford Smith.  
APAAME\_20100601\_SES-0377

in the Wadi Jirm valley beneath the accumulated run-off from the surrounding hills, and levelled to their foundations to make way for later structures. Notably, none of the churches were built on the foundations of Roman temples, but their materials seem to have borrowed from them (Fig. 3).

The most prominent surviving Roman remains belong to an Odeon dating to the late 1st century AD. It is located in the Wadi Jirm below the later location of the Civic Complex Church. Its location took advantage of the reliable springs of the wadi which were used to flood the complex for water displays. The complex could hold c. 400 spectators. Alongside the Odeon to the north-east was an open paved area built in the Ionic order, named the Parvis because of its incorporation with the later church. The exact relation between the Odeon and parvis is uncertain, but both are 'civic' architectural features and their proximity implies that this area may have been the public heart of the city.

Excavations below the stairs to the Civic Complex Church revealed an exedra, first thought to have been indicative of a Nymphaeum, but further excavation revealed an earlier Roman period bath building, further evidence of a central civic area.

Excavation of the bath building and the wider area of the Wadi Jirm valley has never been completed. The area is burdened with a large amount of land fill caused from natural erosion into the valley. Further issues have been caused by the increase in the natural water level by several metres since ancient times to above the foundations of the early Roman building phases. This has



Figure 3: The mismatched columns of the Byzantine Civic Complex Church's atrium. Photograph: Rebecca Banks.



Figure 5a: Reverse of an AE medallion dating to AD183/184 (reign of Commodus) showing a Hexastyle temple with statue situated on a hill with town and colonnade in valley below.

Figure 5b: Trace of figure 5a (P. Watson, 'Pella – Die Stadt am Jordangraben' Figure 92).

Figure 5c: Reverse of AE coin AD183/184 (Commodus) depicting a tetrastyle temple with statue of Apollo within.



Figure 4: Excavations of the bath building, showing pipes pumping out the water while excavation is carried out. Photograph: Pella in Jordan 2, Plate 85.

interrupted the excavations of the bath complex (Fig. 4), and it may also be concealing the forum of ancient Pella.

It is hypothesized that the most likely location for the Roman Forum of Pella is between the main Tell of Khirbet Fahl and Tell Husn, over the Wadi Jirm. This hypothesis is supported by the finding of paving stones and columns in the area, as well as possible pipes that would have guided the water of the Wadi Jirm under the complex. The forum at Roman Philadelphia, modern day Amman, was similarly constructed over a water course that had to be redirected by pipes underneath the paving.

The coinage of Pella has supplied us with a larger picture of the Roman civic landscape. The city began to mint coins c. 83 AD. Depicted on bronze coins from the mid 2nd century is a magnificent temple situated on what is believed to be Tell Husn, the most likely location for a citadel (Figs 5a and 5b). The temple is hexastyle, and a statue of a god is depicted between the central columns. In the valley beneath the temple can be seen a colonnade, perhaps indicating a street or the forum. Another, smaller tetrastyle temple is depicted on other bronze coins, the statue suggesting the temple was dedicated to Apollo



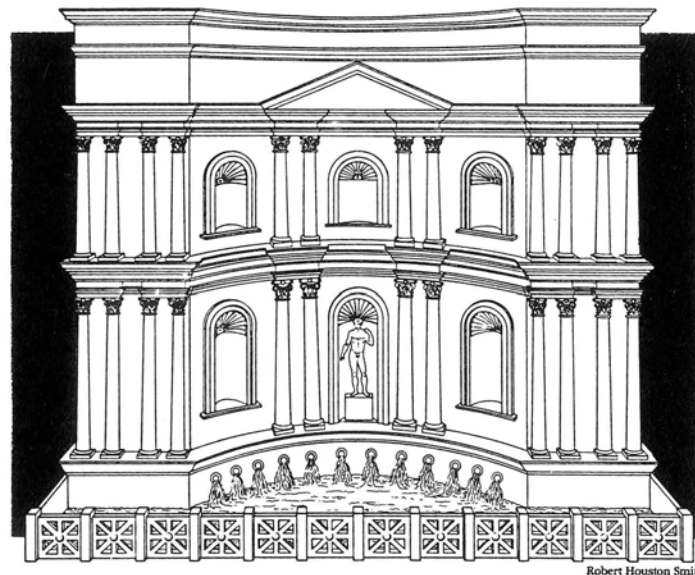


Figure 6: Reconstruction of Nymphaeum derived from its depiction on coins (T. Weber, Pella Decapolitana, fig. 12).

(Fig. 5c).

Coinage of the 3rd century AD depicts a Nymphaeum. The Nymphaeum's most probable location is along the Wadi, so it is unlikely excavations will be able to proceed to discover its location in the near future. The detail on the coin has given us some idea of the form of the structure (Fig. 6).

The temple had proved to be continually elusive until recently, in the excavation seasons of 2007 and 2009, Roman remains of a colonnaded 3m-wide street, gateway and paved courtyard were found, along with a possible large building running north from the street on the south western side of the hill. The remains have been tentatively dated to the second half of the 1st century AD, the same period as the Odeon. These remains are the most promising indication so far of the Roman citadel and temple complex. The location of these remains on the south western summit of Tell Husn would have been particularly visible from the Jarash road.

Excavations to try and find the monumental temple were first made on the Eastern end of Tell Husn in the 1980s, but what was found instead was a fortified complex. The English translation of Tell Husn is 'mound of the fortress', and it can be assumed it is from this fortress the hill received its name. The foundations of this structure date from the Roman period, and it reached its greatest extent during the Byzantine era. The large complex lies on the eastern peak of the natural hill and was constructed of stone and mudbrick. It is likely the site was a policing and administrative garrison, not a fort for defensive purposes as there was no defensive architecture noted in its design. The structure's mudbrick upper courses were found collapsed into the main body of the building, suggesting destruction by earthquake in the mid 7th century AD, though archaeological evidence also suggests the site was abandoned before its destruction. The abandonment of the complex within the city's lifetime, and the lack of defensive walls at Pella (unlike Jarash) indicates that there was probably little need for a large policing or military presence in the region.

A major earthquake in AD 747 caused the main population of Pella to move away from Khirbet Fahl to the plain to the north, Tabaqat Fahl, where habitation has continued to this day. It is likely that Pella's size and wealth had depleted before this, however, as a peaceful shift to Islamic rule in c. 635 BC caused the main trade routes to change and thereafter the wealth of the city diminished. The city gradually became a rural backwater, but it is partially due to this change of fate that we have the opportunity to excavate the majority of the site of Pella without the burden of a living modern population atop it. As excavations continue, it can be expected that more Roman civic buildings will emerge in Pella's landscape, such as a theatre and the forum, and the larger picture of Roman Pella will emerge.

*Excavations at Pella begun in 1967 by the College of Wooster; but work was interrupted by unrest in the region. Work resumed in 1979 as a joint operation between the College and The University of Sydney, until the College of Wooster withdrew from fieldwork in 1985. The University of Sydney has solely continued research and excavation since, and also runs a field school on the site, located on the mound of Khirbet Fahl. More information can be found at the University's website: <http://sydney.edu.au/arts/sophineaf/excavations/index.shtml>*

## Vaison-la-Romaine, France

*David Kennedy*

Alongside our Flickr website with its 60,000 aerial photographs of the Middle East – the Aerial Photographic Archive for Archaeology in the Middle East (APAAME), is a second site - Aerial Photographic Archive for Archaeology in Europe (APAAE). The latter has been developing more slowly but has the potential to grow dramatically as we continue the process of adding the archival photographs by Bob Bewley taken over the course of a career flying in various parts of Europe. It was gratifying, however, to be asked recently by Stéphane Renaud in the Mairie de Vaison-la-Romaine in Provence if they could have copies of our aerial photos of Vaison on the APAAE Flickr site to use in promoting the town. Readers may remember that Vaison was one of a score of Provençal Roman sites photographed from the air in 2009 (RAG 4.4).

Vaison lies 40 km NNE of Avignon and was one of our first ‘targets’ flying from Avignon Airport over the heavily wooded hills and down into the valley of the River Ouvèzes. The modern name preserves the ancient Roman one - Vasio Vocontiorum (Vasio of the Vocontii (= the local Gallic tribe whose administrative centre it became under Roman rule)). Modern Vaison has fewer than 6000 people – probably much as in Roman times.

Vaison is dominated by the great rock outcrop above the river with its mediaeval castle, but it is Roman Vasio that is the major archaeological attraction. A bridge over the river is largely the original Roman one of the 1st century AD. Its durability was demonstrated in 1992 when a huge flood swept down the valley, killed 37 people in Vaison itself, destroyed dozens of houses .... but the bridge lost only its parapet.

The centre-piece of the ancient ruins is the heavily restored theatre, though much of the gleaming seating was cut in recent times.

Just to the west are the extensive foundations of a series of rich houses. All this and a delightful mediaeval town with terracotta roofs and vineyards all around.



The bridge dating back to the 1st century AD.



The heavily restored Roman theatre.



The foundations of rich ancient housing.

Note: In addition to all its other historical attractions Vaison-la-Romaine has a lovely Romanesque cathedral dating back to the 11th Century, and excavations at its rear have exposed a fine example of how early Christian churches were often raised on the ruins of Roman temples as a demonstration of their dominance over the old pagan religion.

*John McDonald*



## Celebrating the Millennium in Ancient Rome - AD 248

*John McDonald*



The Roman Forum today.

### FOUNDING OF THE CITY OF ROME

According to legend, the city of Rome was founded and named by a mythical figure called Romulus.

Several versions of the story have come down to us, but in essence Romulus and his twin brother Remus were supposedly sons of Mars (the God of War) sired on a human mother who came from a noble family descended from the fugitive Trojan prince Aeneas. Her story of divine impregnation apparently didn't cut much ice with the family and after the birth she and her twin infants were condemned to death. The babies were set adrift on the river Tiber but luckily they ran ashore at the site of the future city of Rome, where their lives were miraculously saved when they were found and suckled by a wolf – the 'she-wolf' of Roman legend. Then they were discovered by a shepherd who took them from the wolf and raised them.

As adults Romulus and Remus returned to the site where they had been found and established a city that was destined to become the great metropolis of Rome. But they soon quarrelled and Romulus killed his brother, later naming the city after himself and becoming its first ruler.

The legendary wolf and twins became an enduring symbol of Rome. The famous sculpture known as the Capitoline Wolf was once thought to date from the 5th Century BC and to have stood in the Forum, but it is now suspected to date from the early Middle Ages. However, the wolf and twins also appeared from time to time on Roman coins honouring the city and were a familiar element of Rome's foundation story.



The Capitoline Wolf



Wolf and twins on a coin of the 4th century AD.

Archaeological evidence indicates that the site of Rome has been settled since before the 9th century BC, but the ancient Romans - aware of the very exact foundation legends of many of the Greek colonies of southern Italy, felt obliged to emulate their precision and finally settled during the 1st Century BC on the year that we now call 753 BC as the date when their city was established.

Roman years were generally identified by the names of the Consuls, but they were also counted from the traditional foundation date as years AUC or Ab Urbe Condita ('from the founding of the city').

If you would like to know more about the Roman calendar see 'Notes on Ancient Chronological Systems' by Professor John Melville-Jones which is available on the RAG website.

### 1,000 YEARS OF ROME

According to the Roman calendar AD 248 would have been the year 1001 AUC, the first year of a new Millennium. At that time the Roman Empire was ruled jointly by the father and son Emperors Philip I and Philip II.



**Antoninianus of Philip I**  
**Obverse**

IMP M IVL PHILIPPVS AVG

*(Imperator Marcus Julius Philippus Augustus)*



**Antoninianus of Philip II**  
**Obverse**

IMP PHILIPPVS AVG

*(Imperator Philippus Augustus)*

It fell to these two Emperors – short-lived rulers (AD 244-49) in a time of crisis, to hold spectacular games and other ceremonies to celebrate the 1,000th anniversary of Rome and the beginning of her second Millennium.

A range of special commemorative coins was struck to mark the great event, but only one design specifically recorded that it was the 1,000th anniversary of Rome. The example shown here of one of these "Millennium Coins" is a large bronze piece (a Sestertius) with the reverse inscription MILIARIVM SAECVLVM, meaning roughly "The New Age of 1,000 years" or in other words "The New Millennium".



**Sestertius of Philip I**  
**Obverse**

IMP M IVL PHILIPPVS AVG

*(Imperator Marcus Julius Philippus Augustus)*



**Sestertius of Philip II**  
**Reverse**

MILIARIVM SAECVLVM

*(The New Age of 1,000 years)*

S C either side of a column inscribed with COS III



Fighting wild animals in the arena

## SAECULAR GAMES

In Roman times, a saeculum was usually a period of time equal to the maximum expected length of a human life. Putting it another way, it was a period after which every person alive at the beginning would be dead and the whole population would have been renewed. In this sense it represented the beginning of a 'New Age'.

Normally a saeculum was taken to be either 100 or 110 years, roughly equivalent to our concept of a centenary. Even though average life expectancy in ancient Rome was probably very short by our standards it seems that nevertheless some people did manage to live to a ripe old age.

Games held to celebrate a saeculum were naturally enough known as Saecular Games (or Ludi Saeculares in Latin). Saecular Games had been held on a number of occasions, with both the 100 year and 110 year cycles being followed at different times. But of course in AD 248 they were for an extraordinary Saeculum coinciding with the 1,000th anniversary of the City.

The new Millennium warranted great celebrations and extravagant Saecular Games were staged in the



Colosseum

Colosseum to entertain the people of Rome.

Some of the commemorative coins of 248 AD showed a selection of the exotic wild animals that appeared in the arena for the amusement of the crowds. These examples show an antelope and a lion.



**Antoninianus of Philip I**  
**Reverse**  
 SAECULARES AVGG  
*(The Saecular Games of the Two Augusti)*  
 Antelope walking left



**Antoninianus of Philip II**  
**Reverse**  
 SAECULARES AVGG  
*(The Saecular Games of the two Augusti)*  
 Lion walking right

Other animals that were portrayed on these Saecular Games coins included a stag, an elk and a hippopotamus.

These were the only games ever held to commemorate a Miliarium Saeculum. The beginning of the next Roman millennium wouldn't arrive until AD 1248, and by then of course the Roman Empire had fallen. The remnants of it had long since transformed into the Byzantine Empire based in Constantinople, and even that would only survive for another couple of hundred years before it was conquered by the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II.

## Archaeology at UWA

### Sabbatical

David Kennedy will be overseas until mid-December – at Oxford, then archive research in London and then at Princeton in the USA.

### Fieldwork

David Kennedy, Mat Dalton and Don Boyer will return to Jordan for the second half of May continuing flights as part of the Aerial Archaeology in Jordan programme. The latter has been running since 1997 – the only such programme in the Middle East. In between flights we plan to make field excursions to explore specific sites which this year will include following the Roman road zig-zagging from the Edomite plateau down into the Wadi Araba just south of the Dead Sea.

### School Session

In April John Hunt – now a RAG Committee Member, brought a party of 37 Year 11 students from All Saints College for a two hour session at UWA. There were short presentations to the students by Dr Lara O’Sullivan, Rebecca Banks, Mat Dalton, Svenja von Dietze and David Kennedy on subjects ranging from Ancient History at UWA through Roman coins to studying ancient skeletons. It was a tribute to John Hunt’s teaching that his group was so well-prepared and confident in questioning the presenters.

Plans are in progress to develop such contacts with High Schools.

## Changes to RAG

*from page 1*

annually. In future there will therefore be two Travel Scholarships available annually and now re-named The Don Boyer/ Roman Archaeology Group Travel Scholarships. An appropriate and very satisfactory outcome and one that will permit more West Australians to ‘do’ some Roman Archaeology.

Two other committee changes are important. First, Don Boyer has returned as Deputy Chair and will chair the Winter Saturday sessions later this year. Second, John Hunt, Senior SOSE Teacher at All Saints College, who teaches Ancient History, has joined us and will play a key role in developing our contacts with local High Schools.

I would like to conclude by thanking Kevin O’Toole for all his work over several years as Editor of RAG and as a frequent writer there and lecturer on our Saturday sessions.

## RAG News

### Winter Programme

The two sessions on 21 July and 25 August 2012 will – as usual, take place in the Social Science Lecture Theatre. The details will be published later but the likely lectures will include Rebecca Banks on Palmyra and Sandra Ottley on Roman baths.

### The Don Boyer and RAG Travel Scholarships

This year we had two applicants and with the doubling in the number of scholarships available, we have offered the grants as follows:

Helen van der Riet: University of Oxford training excavation at Dorchester-on-Thames, Iron Age/Roman town, U.K.

Christopher Scibiorski: University of Hawaii Tell Timai Field School, Roman town of Thmuis, Egypt.

## Membership of The RAG

\$25.00	<b>Standard Membership</b>
\$35.00	<b>Family Membership 1</b> 2 adults 1 copy of RAG magazine
\$50.00	<b>Family Membership 2</b> 4 family members 1 copy of RAG magazine
\$50.00	<b>School Membership</b> 2 copies of RAG magazine
\$10.00	<b>Student Membership</b>

Complete and post the form with this edition of RAG or contact The Treasurer at the email address below.

---

### The RAG Inc

<http://www.romanarchgroup.humanities.uwa.edu.au/>

### Chair

#### Winthrop Professor David Kennedy

M205 Classics and Ancient History  
University of Western Australia  
CRAWLEY WA 6009

e-mail: [david.kennedy@uwa.edu.au](mailto:david.kennedy@uwa.edu.au)

Tel: 08 6488 2150

Fax: 08 6488 1182

### Deputy Chair

#### Don Boyer

[donboyer@inet.net.au](mailto:donboyer@inet.net.au)

### Secretary

#### Norah Cooper

[coopsathome@optusnet.com.au](mailto:coopsathome@optusnet.com.au)

### Treasurer

#### Maire Gomes

[gomescm@bigpond.com](mailto:gomescm@bigpond.com)

---

### The RAG Newsletter

#### Editor

#### Rebecca Banks

M205 Classics and Ancient History  
University of Western Australia  
CRAWLEY WA 6009

[rebecca.banks@uwa.edu.au](mailto:rebecca.banks@uwa.edu.au)