

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK REPORTS

doi: 10.1017/S0068246217000265

This year's archaeological fieldwork reports show progress on a number of fronts. Geophysics continues to be a significant element of our activity and at the centre of various collaborations, and we have a full fieldwork season ahead of us. Increasing reflection on the next phases of geophysical research is clearly taking place, and the BSR will continue to participate in those debates. We are particularly delighted with the work at the Lateran, which has produced a major conference and soon a significant monograph; with the remarkable privilege of working right in the heart of Rome at the foot of the Capitoline; and with the training we have offered young archaeologists at Pompeii. Discovery of a Hellenistic phase at Vagnari opens up new and exciting opportunities to see the longer history of this important site. Although Portus has had a quieter year in the field, as we move towards the major multi-volume publication of the site and some related conference volumes, recent work in the Claudian basin has produced promising results, and our close involvement in the planning of the conservation and heritage management aspects of the site is a key sign of the BSR's continuing place as a valued interlocutor.

We maintain activity across a wide area, and in several different periods, from Archaic to late Roman, from very well known sites to minor sites, which are an increasing area of attention. We are pleased to be engaged in collaborations with some 30 museums, superintendencies and universities across the world. Areas that will feature in future reports include work at sites in South Etruria, including Tarquinia, and on the Adriatic coast of Italy.

The research undertaken by the BSR and in collaboration with others contributes to our research themes. San Giovanni in Laterano is our major fieldwork component in the theme *Rome: History, Place and Imagination*, and the contributions we are making to the knowledge of this area of Rome complement the important work of Rosella Rea and the superintendency team nearby in the Metro C excavations, reported by Robert Coates-Stephens in 'Notes from Rome' (pp. 303–8). The Portus Project leads the way in exemplifying the theme of *Connectivity in the Mediterranean*, but is also becoming our most significant practical contribution to *Conservation, Heritage Management and Sustainability*, although we are excited about the upcoming work to make the nymphaeum at Segni open to the public. *Landscapes and Urbanscapes* has long been part of the BSR tradition, and the varied geophysical and excavation projects in Italy are all contributing to our understanding of the interplay between the two.

At the BSR itself, a reorganisation of space has given us improved facilities for bone, pottery and other analysis; and we have also brought the archaeological archive together in a single study space. It is anticipated that the archive will become an increasingly important element of our research over coming years, as we seek ways of making available a wealth of unpublished material. We are beginning to make better use of interns in collaboration with university partners. In addition, and thanks to the generous support of The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, we have been able to upgrade our fieldwork vehicle; through the support of Peter J. Smith, we will be able to welcome post-doctoral researchers to the BSR to work alongside the Portus and Lateran

projects, and with the Italian authorities; and through a generous grant from the Charles K. Williams II Trust, we have a strong basis for continued fieldwork and publication.

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## GEOPHYSICS PROJECTS

doi: 10.1017/S0068246217000277

The archaeological geophysics programme of the British School at Rome in collaboration with the University of Southampton (Archaeological Prospection Service of Southampton (APSS)) continued to conduct surveys across a broad geographical area, as well as across a diverse chronological spectrum. We have been working in the heart of Rome on behalf of the University of Southampton and the Sovrintendenza di Roma Capitale; while Rome slept, we conducted a ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey of the road between the Capitoline Hill and the Theatre of Marcellus. We have also worked in partnership with University College London looking for traces of possible Etruscan buildings at Vulci. It is always a pleasure to collaborate with our colleagues at the Swedish Institute in Rome, and this year we undertook survey work for them at Francavilla in Sicily.

Thanks to the continued funding by The Roger De Haan Charitable Trust, we were able to continue the BSR's research project at Lucus Feroniae. A GPR survey over the southern portion of the settlement has provided further evidence for the layout of the town, and this research will culminate in a collaborative article in *Papers of the British School at Rome* in the near future. The rest of the report focuses on two projects, at Tivoli and Arezzo.

## PLUTONIUM AT HADRIAN'S VILLA, TIVOLI

Most of the buildings in the Hadrianic villa complex at Tivoli have been identified and their function is understood. However, one building in the extreme southeast of the villa complex that remains shrouded in mystery is the 'Plutonium'. The archaeological investigation of the Plutonium, led by Milena Melfi (University of Oxford) and Maria Elena Gorrini (Università degli Studi di Pavia) with the help of Sandro Parinello (Università degli Studi di Pavia), aims to map and re-evaluate the building. The contribution of the BSR–APSS collaboration has been to provide a comprehensive and detailed geophysical survey of the area immediately around the extant remains.

The Plutonium is set on a small rise — the 'High Ground' — and overlooks the rest of the palace grounds. There are substantial standing remains, but a definitive plan of its layout and interpretation of its function have remained elusive. The building lies above the 'inferi', a long water canal, quarried out of the tufa bedrock, in a natural valley that culminates in a grotto. Over the centuries the building has been referred to as the 'Temple of Serapis' (Piranesi plan), the 'Temple of Pluto and Persephone' (Penna, 1833: 123; Ricotti, 2001: 307) and the 'Plutonium' by Pierre Gusman in 1904 (MacDonald