

The Study Group for Roman Pottery

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2013

S.G.R.P. Website - www.romanpotterystudy.org.

Remember to use our website for information and queries. If you would like to add an item, or suggest how the website may be developed, please contact

David Dearlove Email: webmaster@romanpotterystudy.org

Other Contacts:

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Derek Hurst,

Email: treasurer@romanpotterystudy.org

Newsletter Editor: Andrew Peachey

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✓ Newsletter note

Welcome to the Study Group for Roman Pottery Spring newsletter, a little earlier than is typical but we would like to give you plenty of notice of our forthcoming exciting London meeting. This group meeting coincides with the exceptional Pompeii exhibition at the British Museum, and as if by design a highlight of the meeting will be news from the emerging 'Pompeii of the North' at the Walbrook, London for which a small taster is included below.

This project is just one example of emerging archaeological pottery news that we are always eager to hear of, so if you have any interesting news from on-going excavations or analysis, local societies, academia, or any connected discipline we would love to hear about it. In breaking news...12 new kilns have been recorded in Woburn, Bedfordshire and we look forward to bringing you more news in the future.

Many thanks to all contributors Andrew Peachey

√ The Committee and 2013 Elections

The current SGRP committee comprises the following members:

President:
Paul Booth
Treasurer:
Derek Hurst
Secretary:
Jane Timby
JRPS Editor:
Steve Willis
Ordinary Member (Newsletter Editor):
Andrew Peachey

Ordinary Members: Cathy Tester, Amy Thorpe, Andrew Souter, Rachel

Seager-Smith and Meike Weber

Website: David Dearlove

At the next Annual General Meeting on Saturday 29th June 2013, incorporated into the SGRP Conference in London (see below), Cathy Tester and Andrew Souter will be standing down after the completion of their three year terms on the committee. Therefore two positions of Ordinary Member will be open for nominations.

If you would like to nominate someone for the Committee, please complete one of the forms below, print and return, with the nominee's permission, to Jane Timby, Hon Secretary, Sister Mary's Cottage, High Street, Chalford, Gloucestershire, GL6 8DH before the 21st of June 2013.

Ordinary Member (Cathy Tester - term of office expired)

Nomination
Proposed bySeconded by
Ordinary Member (Andrew Souter - term of office expired)
Nomination
Proposed by
Seconded by

√ The 2013 John Gillam Prize

We are constantly looking for nominations of articles or reports for the 2013 John Gillam prize. Please send your nominations to the Gillam Committee, consisting of the President and Publication Committee at president@romanpotterystudy.org

A wide range of work on pottery found in Roman Britain is eligible, so long as it was completed within the last two years. Nominations can include pottery reports (both published and grey literature), synthetic studies, websites, student dissertations, and theses etc. These contributions can range from day-to-day pottery or site reports to monographs and digital projects, as long as they highlight specific aspects of Roman pottery from a technological, regional or thematic perspective.



Museum of London, Saturday 29 June 2013

This one-day SGRP conference will take place on Saturday 29 June at the Clore Learning Centre rooms 1 and 2 at the Museum of London. The conference will have papers on recent London sites and the themes of trade, stock and distribution.

Although not residential the conference offers delegates the opportunity to socialise at an optional evening meal. If you are thinking of staying in London overnight we have included links to local hotels as well as a link to the current British Museum exhibition on Pompeii which may be of interest to members.

Lunch is not provided but there are two cafes/restaurants within the Museum and numerous fast food outlets within 5 minutes walk of the Museum.

The completed booking forms with payment should be sent to the SGRP Treasurer, Derek Hurst by **30 April 2013**.

Provisional Programme

Lectures are mostly 20 minutes in length with 5 minutes for questions.

10.15 Registration with tea and coffee

10.50: Conference opens with welcome address

Session 1: London papers

11.00: The Walbrook revealed: Recent excavations on the site of the London Mithraeum (provisional title)

Sadie Watson, MOLA

11.25: Recent ceramic finds from the Walbrook: an interim discussion

Amy Thorp and Beth Richardson, MOLA

11.50: AGM

13.00: Lunch

Session 2: Trade, stock and distribution

14.10: Three Quays: An interim report on the mid-Antonine samian stock groups (provisional title) **Gwladys Monteil,** Freelance

14.35: Some problems of mortarium typology. Self-criticism of the 2012 JRPS paper and progress report on the development of a database for Gaul and neighbouring regions **Robin P Symonds**, Inrap

15.00: Trade in ceramic building material in the Roman world **Phil Mills**, Freelance

15.25: Tea

Session 3: Miscellany

15.50: Upchurch revisited (provisional title) **Jason Monaghan,** Freelance

16.15: Never change a running system? - A technological approach to the Verulamium Region White ware production in Brockley Hill (*provisional title*)

Silvia Amicone, Institute of Archaeology, UCL

16.40: Shades of grey and red. Recent excavations of three Alice Holt pottery kilns **Jane Timby**, Freelance

17. 05: Terra sigillata hispanica in Silchester and London *(provisional title)* **Joanna Bird,** Freelance

17.10: Additional short papers

17.30: Summing up conference and discussion

17.45: Conference ends

Delegates depart for meal at Pizza Express (optional)

2013 SGRP CONFERENCE Booking form



Museum of London Saturday 29 June 2013

Please return this booking form with payment by 30 April 2013 to:

Derek Hurst SGRP Treasurer 2, Barbel Crescent, Worcester WR5 3QU.

Cheques should be made out to the SGRP

Name:	Tel. no.	
Address:		
Email:		
I would like to attend (please tick appro	opriate boxes):	
Conference fee (including tea and coffe	e) - £25:	
Evening meal at Pizza Express - £20*:		
*Please read the menu attached for the evening meal, if you have any dietary requirements not covered by the menu, please specify:		

Pizza Express SGRP Conference evening meal (29 June 2013) Menu

Starters (choice of 3)

Dough Balls
Garlic Bread
Garlic Bread with Mozzarella

Mains

Your choice of Classic or Leggera pizza, pasta or salad

Desserts (choice of 2)

Chocolate Fudge Cake*
Cheesecake*

*Serve with your choice of cream, Gelato, or mascarpone.

+ Choice of two glasses of Nero D'avola Syrah (RED) or Grillo Chardonny (WHITE).

Links:

Hotels:

Premier Inn seem to be the cheapest options while still being reasonable quality, best three locations for conference while not too noisy etc.are:

Premier Inn, London City (Old Street) (Put 'London City in search box on home page – link below). They are currently quoting £85 Friday 28th June/£109 Saturday 29th June for a double room. Tips: This option is on a main road so I have given two quieter options see below. Also Tripadvisor customer feedback recommends avoiding Room 20 which is placed next to reception area)

Premier Inn, Angel Islington (Put 'London Angel Islington' in search box on home page – link below). They are currently quoting £85 Friday 28th June/£109 Saturday 29th June for a double room.

Premier Inn, Southwark (Put 'London Southwark' in search box on home page—link below). They are currently quoting £97 Friday 28th June/£122 Saturday 29th June for a double room.

http://www.premierinn.com/en/search.action

If people want to check for other options I recommend using the following two websites:

For reviews: www.tripadvisor.co.uk

For cheaper last minute bookings: www.laterooms.com

Information:

British Museum new exhibition -

http://www.britishmuseum.org/whats on/exhibitions/pompeii and herculaneum.aspx



✓ In the beginning...

In light of many of the issues pushing themselves to the forefront of Roman pottery studies and archaeology in general today: specifically concerns over training, standards, archives and funding; it is perhaps fitting to remind ourselves of the progress that has been made. Not so we can rest on our laurels, but so that we can be inspired by the determination and perseverance of our peers in how they have developed our subject in what is, academically speaking a relatively short time. I believe this theme is highlighted by this 'vintage' photograph of former SGRP luminary Graham Webster (left), here with archaeologist Peter Gelling (right).



Photo kindly sourced by James Dinn

✓ "Not so Much a Pot, More and Expensive Luxury"

Leading on from the progress of the Study Group for Roman Pottery, as well as the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group and Medieval Pottery Research Group, it must be remembered we have achieved milestones such as standards for recording and archiving, as well as research agendas acknowledged and acted upon by the vast majority of specialists; the criteria of these standards are not specifically requirements of contemporary archaeological projects even if they comprise common good practice.

This issue has been laid bare in an excellent paper by Paul Blinkhorn and Chris Cumberpatch entitled "Not so Much a Pot, More an Expensive Luxury", originally read at TAG and now being widely circulated amongst pottery and finds groups. The full article can be read at:

http://www.academia.edu/2310508/ Not so Much a Pot More an Expensive Luxury Pot tery analysis and archaeology in the 21st century

For those who have not seen it, it makes sober reading although it is also an issue many are aware of and which the various pottery groups are keen to address. The central theme of the paper is the ever increasing marginalisation of pottery (and wider artefact) analysis in the processes of the modern commercial archaeological industry, often including sampling strategies with little or no foundation, and typically driven by managers who are constantly looking to cut costs. The paper addresses how this consequence of symptomatic of developer funding for archaeology on a per project basis, discusses possible alternative models and the unwillingness of the IfA to consider this issue in the implication of its professional standards. The paper illustrates these issues with clearly laid out examples of pottery recording from the 1960s to the present day, which while obviously representing contrasting ends of a polarised field, form a compelling case that should be at the forefront the SGRP's campaigns for wider adoption of of our

The paper concludes with a quote from Sir Flinders Petrie (1904) that has great resonance:

"Pottery is the greatest resource of the archaeologist.... It is in every respect the most important material for study, and constitutes the essential alphabet of archaeology in every land."

✓ A Trickle Turns to a Tide: Where will the Pottery go?

Unfortunately continuing with concerns over the fate of Roman pottery, a survey by the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) has exposed a lack of storage space and curatorial expertise in English museums dealing with archaeological archives. This may expose a harsh economic and logistical truth that the SGRP may have to discuss and reconcile with its guidelines regarding material discard, but given the issues raised by Blinkhorn and Cumberpatch (above) may represent a catastrophic failure in a system built on the foundation of 'preservation by record' that may ultimately result in the loss of significant data and archive collections.

The survey revealed that there was no room for archaeology archives in 27% of museums, survey also reveals 70% lack a specialist archaeology curator. The survey of 134 museums found that 36 could not accept archaeological archives because of lack of space. It also revealed that museums in 47 local authorities were no longer collecting, while 70% of museums had no specialist archaeology curator.



SMA chairwoman Gail Boyle said: "Many of the museums that responded are local authority museums that have no statutory funding, so they are often targeted [for cuts]. It has become prevalent over time and is getting worse. Archaeological field units are having to store their work, as there is nowhere for them to deposit it. The underlying problem is the lack of space and funding to administer space. The bottom line is that if there was enough money, we could solve the problem quickly."

Adrian Tindall, chief executive of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers, said he thought the numbers in the survey were conservative. "Since planning guidance changed in 1990, there has been such a huge increase in the volume of archives that museums can't handle any more, due to a lack of space and staff," he said. "It is placing a strain on archaeological operations, which have a professional and ethical obligation to retain archives. The temptation is to dispose – and we are trying to avoid a situation where it comes to that."

Tindall added that the federation would like a more rigorous disposal policy, with disposal as the default option unless there were good reasons for retaining material, alongside funding for more storage space around the country.

A spokeswoman for English Heritage said: "There is an issue around storing archaeological archives and our national heritage protection plan has highlighted that an integrated approach is needed to address this." The issues raised are currently the focus of discussions through the Archaeological Archives Forum and future meetings are planned, which will open to anyone working within archaeology.

✓ Journal of Roman Pottery Studies

By Steve Willis (JRPS editor)

We have had a good number of papers received for the next issue (Vol. 16), sufficient for a full Journal. The papers are at the refereeing stage. There are some further papers that are anticipated by the editor either as they have been 'promised' or are known to be near to completion; it is hoped that these too will be received in time to be included in Vol. 16, and if this is so that would make for another large issue as with Vol. 15. Submitted papers range across the following subjects and beyond, covering core aspects and areas, as well as innovative themes: amphorae, kiln sites, military supply, regional studies and samian distribution.

✓ An On-Line Database of the Study Group for Roman Pottery's Bibliography of Roman Pottery Publications

English Heritage has recently agreed to provide a grant to turn the current SGRP bibliography into an online searchable database similar to that which already exists for the MPRG. The SGRP online bibliography will be hosted by the Archaeology Data Service, again as for the MPRG bibliography. The main fields for the SGRP bibliography will be mainly those agreed at the beginning of the bibliography process 25 years ago, though there is scope to enhance, amend and standardise some of the fields. The bibliographic data will be entered onto an Access database which will be passed to the ADS on completion for them to create the online resource. The bibliography will be accessible via a link from the SGRP website. The ADS will handle links to/with other bibliographic databases, the future maintenance of the bibliography database and will add updates provided by the SGRP. It is hoped to have the online bibliography up and running by the autumn.

The group would like to thank Rob Perrin for his hard work and perseverance in driving and developing this key element of the SGRP.

✓ Updating the Roman Pottery Kilns of Britain

It is a strategic aim of the SGRP to build upon the work completed of Vivien Swan in her seminal volume 'The Roman Pottery Kilns of Britain'. This monograph was originally published in 1982, with data collection largely completed by 1980. The data from the original publication, incorporated as microfiche, has in recent years been digitised and made available through a searchable website (http://mapdata.thehumanjourney.net/vgswandb_index.html). 'The Roman Pottery Kilns of Britain' has now passed its 30th birthday and remains one of the go-to volumes for Roman pottery specialists researching kilns, but simply by the passing of time now omits large quantities of data, especially due to the advent of commercial archaeology from the 1990s onwards.

Therefore, following the digitisation project, the next phase for the SGRP is to update the data that formed the foundation of Vivien's research. In order to gauge the amount of data now available every Historic Environment Record (HER) in England has been contacted (Wales will follow in due course), and by extension it appears that the records held by the HERs will be sufficient to comprise a basic level of data to fill the original database fields. It is greatly encouraging to report that to date we have had positive responses from 67 of the 84 HERs in England, and can now begin to process this data into pro formas. In due course it would be of great assistance if any SGRP members would be willing to help process or check any of this data. If anybody would be interested in this or has any other questions regarding this project, please contact Andrew Peachey (ajpeachey@yahoo.co.uk).

✓ Fish Sauce and other Great Roman Menu Ideas

It is oft commented upon that interpreting the pottery vessels we record and analyse is a very subjective exercise due to the ambiguity of our understanding of their original function.

One method for unravelling the myths of Roman pottery use and consumption is to attempt to use it in the scenarios it was intended for... as containers, cooking vessels or to serve classical cuisine. Much of the untangling of Roman cuisine has been driven by the inspirational work of Sally Grainger, including in books such as Cooking Apicius: Roman Recipes for Today (2006) and the Classical Cookbook (with Andrew Dalby, 2012). Now, in part inspired by Sally's work, Neill George is extending experimentation with Roman food to a blog called Pass the Garum, not only listing ingredients and recipes, but charting the results and exhibiting them with photos.



Pass the Garum was inspired by two things: the ubiquitous fish sauce the Romans added to everything and Neill's love of food and cooking. So if you would like inspiration of what may have been served on the fragments we piece together, or just fancy brightening up your menu at home, then you can find the blog at: http://pass-the-garum.blogspot.co.uk/ or https://www.facebook.com/#!/PassTheGarum

✓ A Taste of What's to Come: Emerging Evidence from the 'Pompei of the North', London

By Amy Thorp

The Museum of London Archaeology Roman pottery team are currently spot dating the vast quantities of pottery that have been retrieved from the site of Bloomberg Place in the City of London. In the heart of the Walbrook valley this site has produced an incredible array of well-preserved finds resulting in the nickname 'The Pompeii of the North' and widely reported on the BBC.



This beautiful complete ring-anddot beaker is from a foundation deposit. At the SGRP conference we will be reporting our initial thoughts on some of this exciting material.

Photograph © MOLA

✓ Online Journal News No.1

From Katie Green (Communications and Access Mana)

The ADS and the Royal Archaeological Institute (RAI) are pleased to announce that the first 120 volumes of the Archaeological Journal are now available to view online at the ADS. The RAI are a leading national archaeology society and have annually published the Archaeological Journal since 1844. The journal contains papers on the Institute's interests, which span all aspects of the archaeological, architectural and landscape history of the British Isles. It presents the results of archaeological and architectural survey and fieldwork on sites and monuments of all periods as well as syntheses and overviews of such work the British Isles.

This is an excellent resource for all those interested in British archaeological, architectural and landscape history as well as the development of the disciplines themselves. Follow this link to take a look: http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/archjournal/

✓ Online Journal News No.2

From Judith Winters (Editor, Internet Archaeology)

We are very pleased to announce that Internet Archaeology's back catalogue (up to and including issue 21) is now Open Access. That's more than half of all our published content now freely available. A low-cost subscription will be required only for content in issues 22 onwards, except where Open Access has already been enabled in these later issues. It is IA policy to enable Open Access on all content when article development costs are met with the longer term aim of making the whole of IA open. As a result of this move, the cost of access to articles for individuals has been reduced to £7.50 for individuals (permanent access).

Having demonstrated a serious effort to move in this direction, the journal will look to its future authors for the funds to cover article development costs (via grant-giving/funding bodies or other research sponsors). But if you have no access to funding, then this is not an obstacle to a publication in IA. Your article would be subject to subscription during this transition but of course this is subject to change with a stepped increase in OA uptake and/or other external developments.

As a result of this Open Access policy, SGRP members may be very interested to see that Steven Willis' extremely useful and progressive "Samian Pottery, a Resource for the Study of Roman Britain and Beyond: the results of the English Heritage funded Samian Project. An e-monograph" is available to all. But...taking nothing away from Steve's outstanding research, Internet Archaeology contains many more articles worth exploring, and can be found at: http://intarch.ac.uk

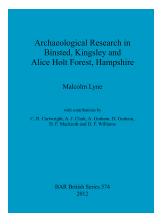
✓ New Publications

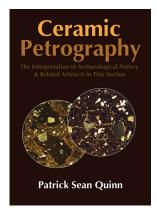
The first volume on this list is especially interesting as, with thanks to Malcolm Lyne, it includes the publication of highly significant groups from the Alice Holt industry. The other books represent interesting technical and thematic volumes, including papers by Kayt Marter Brown and Rachael Seager Smith of glued Roman vessels, and Louisa Campbell on the social biographies of material culture.

BAR 574. Archaeological Research in Binsted, Kingsley and Alice Holt Forest, Hampshire by Malcolm Lyne with contributions by C.R.Cartwright, A.J.Clark, A.Graham, D.Graham, D.F.Mackreth and D.F.Williams

The first part deals with the development of the local landscape between the Mesolithic period and c.1700. This is followed by a series of excavation reports, including those on Alice Holt pottery waste dumps AH5 and AH 52. The latter report includes 849 pot drawings from 36 phases of industrial activity spanning the period between the Late Iron Age and c.AD.270, two successive archaeomagnetic kiln dates and accounts of seven experimental kiln firings.

£50.00. 350 pages and illustrated throughout.





Ceramic Petrography: The Interpretation of Archaeological Pottery & Related Artefacts in Thin Section by Patrick Sean Quinn

Thin section ceramic petrography is a versatile interdisciplinary analytical tool for the characterization and interpretation of archaeological pottery and related artefacts, including ceramic building materials, refractories and plaster. Using over 200 colour photomicrographs of thin sections from a diverse range of artefacts, archaeological periods and geographic regions, this book illustrates the spectrum of compositional and microstructural phenomena that occur within ancient ceramics under the micro-scope and provides comprehensive guidelines for their study within archaeology. The book is structured according to the main steps involved in the analysis and interpretation of archaeological ceramic thin sections, including classification, characterization, the determination of provenance and the reconstruction of manufacturing technology. It can be used as a reference manual for microscope research as well as a course book for specialist training on thin section petrography and archaeological ceramic analysis.

£35.00. 260 pages; colour throughout

Make do and Mend: Archaeologies of Compromise, Repair and Reuse edited by Ben Jervis and Alison Kyle.

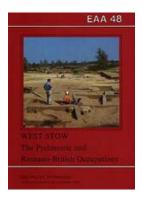
This volume derives from a session held at the 2010 Theoretical Archaeology Group conference (Bristol University). The aims of this session were to explore occurrences of compromise (or making do) and repair (mending) in the past, with a particular focus on material culture. This original scope broadened to encompass reuse inextricably linked to the central themes, particularly when considered biographical approach. Contents: Archaeologies of Compromise, Repair and Reuse (Ben Jervis and Alison Kyle); 1) What did the apocrypha know? Glued pottery vessels from Springhead and other Romano-British sites in south and eastern England (Kayt Marter Brown and Rachael Seager Smith); 2) Modifying Material: Social biographies of Roman material culture (Louisa Campbell); 3) Reuse, Repair and Reconstruction. Functioning aqueducts in post-Roman Spain (Javier Martínez Jiménez); 4) A Hole for the Soul? Possible functions of post-firing perforations and lead plugs in early Anglo-Saxon cremation urns (Gareth Perry); 5) Riveting Biographies. The theoretical implications of early Anglo-Saxon brooch repair, customisation and use adaptation (Toby Martin); 6) Making-do or Making the World? Tempering choices in Anglo-Saxon pottery manufacture (Ben Jervis); 7) More Than Just a Quick Fix? Repair Holes on Early Medieval Souterrain Ware (Alison Kyle); 8) Beyond a 'Make-do and Mend' Mentality. Repair and reuse of objects from two medieval village sites in Buckinghamshire (Carole Wheeler); 9) When is a Pot Still a Pot? (Duncan H Brown); 10) Survival and Significance: Some Concluding Remarks on Reuse as an Aspect of Cultural Biography (Mark A Hall).

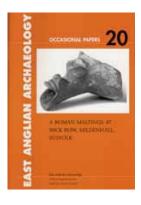
£26.00. 122 pages; illustrated throughout

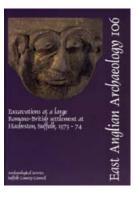


✓ Special Offers on Books

Jude Plouviez has kindly brought to our attention that SGRP members might be interested in the Special Offer (discounted) publications currently available from Suffolk County Council. Perhaps particularly relevant to Group members would be Burgh (EAA 40), West Stow Prehistoric & Roman (EAA 48), Hacheston (EAA 106), Wherstead (Occas Paper 9) and Beck Row (Occas Paper 20)







Attached is the full publications list and the price list - both are also accessible on the website: http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/libraries-and-culture/culture-and-heritage/archaeology/, while the full range of East Anglian Archaeology Reports may be found at http://www.eaareports.org.uk/index.html

√ la Société Française d'Etude de la Céramique Antique en Gaule (SFECAG)

Rob Perrin has sent this very worthwhile reminder about the upcoming SFECAG meeting in Amiens from 9-12th May. The opening theme is the dynamics of vessel evolution/transition around the time of the conquest of Gaule belgique (Belgium, South Netherlands, Luxembourg, NE France and western Germany). After that, there is a round up of pottery research in France, Spain etc. The lectures don't start until the Friday as the first evening is always given over to welcome speeches and drinks, and finish Sunday lunchtime. There will be a Saturday afternoon trip to the Samara Archaeological Park in Picardy where there will be some experimental kiln firing. There will also be a visit on Friday to an excavation and the opening of an exhibition on 'eating and drinking in Northern Gaul'. Saturday night is reserved for the conference dinner. The lectures are obviously mostly in French, but there are lots of pictures and the exhibitions are usually good. There are usually other English speakers attending, especially from Belgium and the Netherlands.

The full programme may be found at: http://sfecag.free.fr/. If anybody is interested in going, perhaps they could contact Rob as you might be able to share travel etc.

✓ Roman Mancetter

While not focusing directly on pottery, Mancetter is a recurring location and theme (especially regarding mortaria) in discussions within the group and this meeting may appeal.

