



Auckland Classical Association

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Newsletter 3: November 2008

1. SUBSCRIPTION

A sticker on your envelope indicates you are NOT yet a 2008 financial member.

Subscriptions for 2009 are now due, and may be paid at the Annual General Meeting. Please forward \$20 subscription or inform the Secretary if you wish mail-outs to continue. Please make cheques in favour of the Auckland Classical Association.

Please remember to notify the Secretary of any change in residential or email address.

2. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, 3 December 2008, 6.30 pm 1 Wynyard Street, Dept of Classics and Ancient History, tea room. *Please note the change of date from that previously advertised.*

There will be a dinner to follow at the Café, the Hyatt Hotel. Please notify the Secretary if you will be attending the dinner.

3. DEPARTMENT NEWS – OBITUARIES

Tribute by Professor Patrick Lacey for Mr Rod Cowlin

Roderick COWLIN was a Cambridge man. He had entered Downing College to read Classics, but after completing the first part of his Classics degree he transferred to the Near Eastern options of the Archaeology and Anthropology degree. For this he studied the Egyptian and Mesopotamian Languages, Culture and History; where he did well enough to be appointed by my predecessor, Dr. Blaiklock, to a lectureship in the Auckland Classics Department where Dr. Blaiklock was building up the subject Biblical History and Literature, which he introduced and promoted and planned to advance to Stage II (three papers). Rod had the (rather rare) combination of skills required.

When I arrived in 1969 Rod was employed mainly in this subject, especially Near Eastern History, though he did take occasional courses in Latin Set Books.

When I introduced Stage II and III – at least three papers at each level – and MA in Ancient History in successive years, Rod took a leading part in the teaching, being the sole teacher in the Mesopotamian History and Akkadian languages papers. This, he said, was his preference, but it also became necessary because Naguib Kanawati who was appointed to a new lectureship to teach advanced Near Eastern options was a fine Egyptologist but without Rod's ability to teach both languages and cultures.

This arrangement - of Naguib, and after him Tony Spalinger, taking the advanced Egyptian options and Rod the Mesopotamian and Akkadian – lasted for the remainder of my tenure of the chair.

Rod was a very co-operative and helpful staff member with a voracious appetite for knowledge – I remember, over tea in the department once, a student saying that he had come in on the bus that

morning, and, on looking over Rod's shoulder at what he was reading found that he was learning Turkish, Rod almost certainly knew more languages than anyone in the department – or indeed in the University. He was, however, unwilling to publish or review or go to Iraq to dig, or study on the spot, and he remained unknown outside the Department. This was a pity, as he was a true scholar.

I have asked Mrs. Shirley Temm, one of his top students, to remember him as a teacher. She writes:

Tribute by Mrs Shirley Temm for Mr Rod Cowlin

In so many ways it was an extraordinary privilege to be a student of Rod Cowlin. It was also a challenge. His erudition was remarkable and, I fear, wasted on us, not that he ever gave you that feeling as he patiently answered our questions. His love of learning was itself an encouragement and his enthusiasm for both history and language could not but stimulate us to greater effort. Any question took him to his bookshelf so that he could offer the evidence of his reply and make sure not only that you understood but that this new piece of knowledge could be of use to you. Language classes in his room were an illustration of his patience as he carefully teased apart the complexities of ancient languages. It was also a lesson of love. Love for his work, and love in the way he so willingly and eagerly shared his knowledge with us.

Tribute by Mrs Kylie Burling for Mr Rod Cowlin

In my first year at University, 1989, Shirley Temm (who was one of my tutors) told us of having asked Rod to translate a passage of text for her. About half an hour later he presented her with the translation – it was translated into five languages, four of them dead, and none of them English! He really was a great scholar who always provided his students with thorough and clear guidance, and I am personally very grateful for this. He set a very high standard for himself and for his students, and he helped his students to achieve more than they thought they would.

Tribute by Professor Patrick Lacey for Mrs Beryl Stout

Beryl STOUT: Members of the Association, especially those who were in the Department in the late 70's and early 80's, will have been saddened to hear of the death on November 18th, of Beryl Stout, from cancer. Beryl was 'a character'. My life as H.o.D. changed dramatically from the day that she came into my study and announced that she had been asked if she would be Secretary of the Classics Department. She had been in the Engineering Faculty at Canterbury University and knew the Greek Alphabet, and was interested, and so was I. The longer she stayed the more pleased I was that she had come.

She was not only extremely quick and effective in the work expected of a secretary, but she was an excellent administrator and not afraid to make arrangements and take decisions she knew I would approve of. I could say "tell her to come on Tuesday" and a time would be arranged when I was free and if the interview might be awkward or embarrassing the door into her office would just happen to be just visibly open.

She had a student-age daughter and knew how to interact with students; all respected her. I think many were awestruck and not a few terrified. But actually she was very kind hearted and pro-student. She was experienced in dealing with academic staff too, was quick to understand their personalities and foibles – mine too – and could get staff to believe they wanted to do what she wanted. I once heard of her referred to as "H.o.D." when a certain staff member had been told what needed to be done. She saved literally hours of my time almost every week. When examination times came results and grades were quickly and accurately recorded, at times with a hint that this one or that needed another look.

Inside and outside the Department she was a voluble talker, but she did not gossip, and she had the gift of friendship, which my wife and I enjoyed. She was also a formidable bridge player, or so I have been told. Our sympathy goes out to Tom her husband, Judy and Heather her daughters, and their families. She was one of those who could truly be called a memorable personality and she will be sorely missed by many people.

4. NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF CLASSICS

All news articles were sourced by Kylie Burling unless otherwise cited, and have been abridged. Please send news articles of possible interest to the Association to the Secretary. These will be collated and edited for inclusion in future newsletters. Thank you again to the editing team for the time and effort expended on our behalf, especially Professor Lacey, Mrs Warrington, and Miss Debenham.

Sent in by Abigail Dawson

Pharaoh's vessel to get an afterlife

21 July 2008, NZ Herald

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/2/story.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10522550&ref=watchmorning

The first of Pharaoh Khufu's two boats was removed from another pit in 1954, rebuilt and is now in a museum constructed above the pit.

Archaeologists and scholars will excavate hundreds of fragments of an ancient Egyptian wooden boat entombed in an underground chamber next to Giza's Great Pyramid and try to reassemble it.

The 4500-year-old vessel is the sister ship of a similar boat removed in pieces from another pit in 1954 and painstakingly reconstructed.



Experts believe the boats were meant to ferry the pharaoh, who built the Great Pyramid, in the afterlife.

It is a narrow vessel measuring 43m, with a rectangular deckhouse and long, interlocking oars that soar overhead. The cedar timbers of its curved hull are lashed together with hemp rope in a technique used until recent times by traditional shipbuilders along the Red Sea, the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

The unexcavated boat is thought to be of similar design, but smaller. Its wood - Lebanese cedar and acacia from Egypt - is less well preserved. A small hole cut into the pit at the time of its discovery allowed insects and air inside, contributing to the decay.

Conserving the wood and reassembling the craft could take a decade. Work on the first boat, by comparison, took 25 years, in part because there was little information on Egyptian boat building other than carvings and small models found in tombs. But the first effort should make it easier to piece together the second boat.

John Darnell, an Egyptologist at Yale University, said new research into the second boat could fill in some blanks about the significance of the vessels and help determine whether they ever actually plied Nile River waterways or were of purely spiritual import.

"In Egypt, almost everything real had its counterpart meaning or significance in the spiritual world. But there's a lot of debate as to whether these vessels ever were used or not," Darnell said. Those who argue the vessels may have touched water point to rope marks on the wood that could have been caused by the rope becoming wet and then shrinking as it dried.

But others believe these were symbolic vessels, not funerary boats used to bring the Pharaoh Khufu's embalmed remains up the Nile from the ancient capital of Memphis for burial in the Great Pyramid, the oldest and largest of Giza's pyramids.

Solar symbols found inside the second pit offer more evidence that those who disassembled and buried the boats believed Khufu's soul would travel from his tomb in the pyramid through a connecting air shaft to the boat chambers and that he would use the boats to circle the heavens, like the sun god, taking one boat by day and the other by night.

Satyr's faction

23 August 2008, The Australian

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24206916-5013571,00.html>

A Grecian urn depicting a bawdy theatre scene sheds light on the ancient world and embodies the ideals that sparked 18th-century neoclassicism.

Established in 1860, the Nicholson Museum is a small but important archeological museum within the University of Sydney which began with a gift from one of the university's founders, Charles Nicholson, and has since been enlarged by purchases, donations and works acquired through the university's archeological digs.

Among the most beautiful pieces is the Nicholson Hermes, an ancient copy of a 4th century BC Hermes by Praxiteles. The most famous of the copies is the so-called Belvedere Antinous at the Vatican, but the Nicholson statue, despite or because of its worn and weather-beaten surface, is in some ways more evocative and touching.

Among the finest vases in the Nicholson collection is an Apulian bell krater from the early 4th century BC, which the Nicholson acquired in 1946 when its then curator, A.D. Trendall, bought it at auction in London for pound stg. 44.

Three young men stand facing each other with the costumes and masks of chorus members in a satyr play, the short pieces that offered comic relief at the end of a day of tragedies at the ancient festival of Dionysus. They are very young because still beardless: in ancient Greece men did not shave and wore a beard once it had begun to grow. The onset of puberty was later before the Industrial Revolution and they are perhaps 18. Boys of this age, called ephebes, would be beginning their compulsory military service (in Athens at any rate) but were allowed time off for chorus rehearsals: theatre was considered an important part of civic life.

They wear nothing but tight little shorts that serve to bear the traditional attributes of the satyr: a phallus and a horse's tail. They are waiting for their entrance. Two are talking, holding their bushy-bearded masks with snub noses and pointy ears, while the third has put his mask on and is practising his dance steps. What is perhaps most striking is the extraordinary ease and fluency with which the artist handles the weight, poise and movement of the figure; and this is presumably only an echo of the mastery exhibited in the more ambitious panel and fresco paintings of the time, all now lost.

Were they made for everyday use at dinner parties (symposia) or as grave wares? Or were they made and used for both purposes? How is one to understand the imagery? Many vases seem to illustrate scenes from the theatre; are they to be taken as evidence of what ancient productions looked like? Or are they rather the images of myths concerned with the afterlife and with mystery religions?

A case in point is another fine krater that clearly shows Dionysus with an attendant. The slightly burlesque tone makes it impossible not to think of the opening of Aristophanes's comedy *The Frogs*, in which the god of wine and theatre, disillusioned with contemporary playwrights, visits the underworld to bring back one of the great authors of the past.

Kraters and the underworld bring us back to the time and place these pots were collected. A krater is a bowl for mixing water and wine, and the term was borrowed (in 1613) to describe the mouth of a volcano.

Ghosts of Vesuvius

19 July 2008, The Australian

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24024006-16947,00.html>

The ancient cities and villas destroyed in AD79 continue to yield their secrets.



Floor mosaic inscribed cave canem (beware of the dog) in a Pompeii house

On a ravishing afternoon in early May, Museum Victoria director Patrick Greene picked his way along the fire-scorched stones of the city where on August 24, AD79, time stopped dead.

The British archeologist made his first visit to Pompeii, a 44,000sqm slice of lost time that has only recently begun to show its age, in a spirit of professional homage. But he returned in May as something of a power in the archeological world, for next year Greene will bring Pompeii, or at least a good slice of it, to Melbourne.

Italian authorities, pledging to repair degraded buildings and improve tourist facilities, this month declared a state of emergency at the UNESCO World Heritage site, located near Naples, raising the possibility that Pompeii the touring show will be a marked improvement on Pompeii the tourist destination.

As the afternoon crowds thinned and Greene strolled in the shadow of the volcano's shattered cone through the remains of richly decorated villas, bath houses, communal latrines and temples to deities Venus and Isis, Jupiter and Jove -- the chaotic jumble of Roman culture high and low -- he found himself viewing the ruined city with an eye to his Australian audience.

"Roman olive oil and wine everyone knows about," he says. "But the citizens of Pompeii were also fond of a fish sauce made from the crushed and fermented intestines of anchovy and eel, which they sloshed on their food vigorously. Think of it perhaps as Roman ketchup or Vegemite. In fact it probably divided the population in a similar way."

As Greene made his way along streets whose narrowness often surprises the visitor, the remains of Pompeii's takeaway food shops and numerous taverns brought to mind Melbourne's lively bar culture, while the graffiti and election slogans that daub the city's walls evoked a boisterous public spirit. Pompeii may be a dead city but it is certainly not silent.

"It's also clear that the people were obsessed with gladiatorial contests and sport," Greene says. "We have our own version of those called the AFL. In fact, the spectacles were followed with such passion that the stadium was closed down for 10 years by the civic authorities following a riot between fans."

The sickening violence of the blood sports was peculiarly Roman, Greene adds, but the intense tribalism they provoked among the citizenry "brings us right up to the present".

The people of Pompeii also enjoyed a distinctly liberal attitude to what we would regard as pornography: adorning the city walls are outsized phalluses and renderings of lovers, including a fornicating faun and goat. Some of this was designed to please a restricted circle of connoisseurs, but from classical Greek times on, the elephantine phalluses were as common as garden gnomes, of a particularly arresting kind.

More than any other Graeco-Roman archeological site, the Vesuvian cities invite parallels with the art of photojournalism, for what we see here is the classical world stripped bare. For centuries after the rediscovery of Greek and Roman antiquity in the mid-to-late 18th century, bone-white temple friezes and antique statuary fuelled the dreams of philhellenes and shaped the tastes of the European aristocracy. But along with the decorative arts, Pompeii offers up the everyday: the brothels, pie stands and a lively entertainment district.

Like some macabre paparazzo, Vulcan the city's destroyer feeds our voyeuristic tastes. Priests, plebs and at least one aristocratic woman, who seems to have been carrying on with a gladiator, are preserved in their final moments. The tragedy offers truth in its awful clarity and at great human cost. It is reality archeology.

This sense of gritty realism makes Pompeii a story with a unique appeal to modern tastes, while placing it at the centre of a broad-based revival of interest in classical antiquity. As Greene acknowledges, a recent museum audience poll found that Melburnians were more interested in the ancient world than any other subject, even dinosaurs. They are not alone: the core of the Pompeii exhibition is now touring the US.

At the same time, contemporary culture is awash with specialist, generalist and fictional treatments of Pompeii, Roman civilisation and its Greek precursor. In schools, too, ancient history is on the rise. More students in NSW study the ancient world than the modern. At the universities of Sydney and

Melbourne classics are booming at a time when the traditional humanities are on the wane. The pulse of a seemingly dead subject is steady and strong. The classical world, yet again, is being reborn.

One of those contributing to the surge in classical curiosity is the superintendent of Pompeii, Pier Giovanni Guzzo, from whose office the touring exhibition originates. The Melbourne show, set to open in June next year, will focus on daily life. Though the American and the Australian exhibitions share the same title, *A Day in Pompeii*, the American exhibition is more heavily slanted to the tragic narrative of AD79: the death and destruction of a city.

Author of an important book on the Vesuvian cities, *Storia e paesaggi della città antica*, for Guzzo the ruins at Pompeii, Herculaneum and nearby Stabiae, Boscoreale and Oplontis -- in antiquity the Bay of Naples was one long crescent of habitation -- contain "all the ancient material" snap-frozen in time. ... Its discovery contributed to the birth of neoclassicism, the mania of the Napoleonic court and the inspiration for regency style. "It was on the minds of the cultured people of England," Guzzo says. "And England made Australia."

But Pompeii not only illuminates the refined and the vulgar, the elite and the plebeian, upstairs and downstairs, it unites these social strata through the democracy of death.

Where nearby Herculaneum was swallowed whole by a slow-moving stream of liquid fire that allowed most of its citizens to escape, Pompeii's end came with a great groaning of the earth followed by the roar of the eruption and then, after a time, a clatter of volcanic pumice and ash. Next came the volcano's poisonous breath, air made viscous with dust and ash, and the crashing columns and masonry. Some of the citizenry were simply trampled to death in the pitch dark. In all, about 2000 people are believed to have perished, one-tenth of the city's population.

For Greene, among the most poignant objects disinterred from Pompeii are the plaster body casts of the victims caught in their death throes: a mother and her daughter, a girl clutching a mirror, a man and his dog, a beggar with surprisingly good quality sandals.

In 1864 the head of excavations realised that the lava had embraced the form of its victims so snugly that it preserved their most intimate contours, in some instances even the delineations of pubic hair. By filling the cavity formed after the body's decomposition with liquid plaster the dead could be re-animated, in a sense, and an August day in the 79th year of the Christian era brought back to life.

"As an archeologist I find these casts extraordinary," Greene offers, "and as a museum director particularly challenging. ... They allow us to see Pompeii not just as a buried ruin but as a human tragedy."

According to Steven Ellis, a University of Sydney-trained archeologist and assistant professor of classics at the University of Cincinnati who has been involved in the US version of *A Day in Pompeii*, the exhibition's fresh slant on ancient urbanity explains something of its attraction.

"We all live in cities and can relate to the experience of walking its streets, looking into windows, stopping for a drink, watching the world go by," says Ellis, who completed a doctoral thesis on Pompeii's wine bars. "And this explains why people from China, North Africa, Australia and Europe all respond to the experience of Pompeii. Compare it to the Egyptian pyramids, for example, which are much more of an alien experience." ...

"We've gone past the floor layer to find out how shops, houses, workshops and businesses worked," he says. "In one of our sites we've been able to see how on adjoining buildings one family thrived economically while the other went into decline. The wealthier family actually expands on to its neighbour's land, opening up a restaurant there. We find the remains of all sorts of foodstuffs: in effect, the menu.

"This included many types of fish, pigs killed quite young, and something very curious: a knee bone that nobody could identify. We had to take it to an archeological zoologist. It turned out to be the remains of a giraffe that may have been shown in the spectacles and later butchered."

Meanwhile, ongoing excavations at nearby Oplontis, Boscoreale and Stabiae are widening our contemporary gaze to the luxurious mansions of the Roman elite. In fact, these were some of the first

structures to be excavated under the Bourbon monarchy that ruled Naples in the 1750s, but with the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum they became, in effect, sideshows.

Sent in by Greg Thwaite

Saving Pompeii From the Ravages of Time and Tourists

26 July 2008, New York Times

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/26/arts/design/26ruin.html?ex=1217736000&en=4ceed0eca534e645&ei=5070&emc=eta1>

Citing threats to public security and to the site itself, the Italian government has for the first time declared a yearlong state of emergency for the ancient city of Pompeii.

Nearly 2,000 years after Mount Vesuvius buried Pompeii under pumice and steaming volcanic ash, some 2.6 million tourists tramp annually through this archaeological site, which is on Unesco's World Heritage list.

Frescoes in the ancient Roman city, one of Italy's most popular attractions, fade under the blistering sun or are chipped at by souvenir hunters. Mosaics endure the brunt of tens of thousands of shuffling thongs and sneakers. Teetering columns and walls are propped up by wooden and steel scaffolding. Rusty padlocks deny access to recently restored houses, and custodians seem to be few and far between.

This month the government drafted a retired lawman, Renato Profili, the former prefect of Naples, to map out a strategy to combat neglect and degradation at the site. Mr. Profili has been given special powers for one year so he can bypass the Italian bureaucracy and speedily bolster security and stop the disintegration.

The hope is that many houses and villas now closed to the public and exposed to looting and vandalism will soon be opened and protected.

Sent in by Greg Thwaite

A Dead Language That's Very Much Alive [in the U.S.A.]

7 October 2008, The New York Times

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/07/nyregion/07latin.html?_r=1&ei=5070&emc=eta1&oref=slogin

The Latin class at Isaac E. Young Middle School here was reading a story the other day with a familiar ring: Boy annoys girl, girl scolds boy. Only in this version, the characters were named Sextus and Cornelia, and they argued in Latin.

The resurgence of a language once rejected as outdated and irrelevant is reflected across the country as Latin is embraced by a new generation of students like Xavier who seek to increase SAT scores or stand out from their friends, or simply harbor a fascination for the ancient language after reading Harry Potter's Latin-based chanting spells.

Latin was once required at many public and parochial schools, but fell into disfavor during the 1960s when students rebelled against traditional classroom teachings and even the Roman Catholic Church moved away from Latin as the official language of Mass. Interest in Latin was revived somewhat in



the 1970s and began picking up in the 1980s with the back-to-basics movement in many schools, according to Latin scholars, but really took off in the last few years as a language long seen as a stodgy ivory tower secret infiltrated popular culture.

Harry Potter books use Latin words for names and spells, and at least two have been translated into Latin ("Harrius Potter et Philosophi Lapis"), as have several by Dr. Seuss ("Cattus Petasatus"). Movies like "Gladiator" and "Troy" have also lent glamour to the ancient world.

"Sometimes you need to know Latin to understand that part," said Adrian McCullough, 10, a sixth grader in New Rochelle who plans to reread the Harry Potter books now that he is learning Latin.

Marty Abbott, education director of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, said it was possible that Latin would edge out German as the third most popular language taught in schools, behind Spanish and French, when the preliminary results of an enrollment survey are released next year. In the last survey, covering enrollment in 2000, Latin placed fourth. "In people's minds, it's coming back," she said. "But it's always been there. It's just that we continue to see interest in it."

Max Gordon, a sophomore, said that he had learned more about grammar in Latin class than in English class. And he occasionally debates the finer points of grammar with his mother, Kit Fitzgerald, a video artist who studied Latin, while washing dishes after dinner.

Sent in by Elizabeth Debenham

A Dead Language That's Very Much Alive [in the U.K.]

"Para. from article by Tom Holland (Observer of 28.09.08):

This autumn, a whole legion of books by heavyweight classicists will be advancing on bookshops. In addition to Beard's study of Pompeii, enthusiasts for ancient history can enjoy biographies of Philip II of Macedonia, Julius Caesar and Attila. Most unexpected of all is a dense yet wholly gripping analysis by Robin Lane Fox of the Greek dark ages, a period that even specialists have always regarded as intimidatingly obscure. Something rather startling is evidently going on: publishers seem to believe that classical scholarship may actually sell.

FIVE TO READ

NEW CLASSICAL TITLES

Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town

Mary Beard (Profile) Whirlwind tour of the lost town, punctuated with cheerful myth-busting by the provocative Beard.

Travelling Heroes

Robin Lane Fox (Allen Lane) Engaging guide to the lives of the Greeks in 800BC, the age of Homer.

Philip II of Macedonia

Ian Worthington (Yale) Biography of formidable military commander, better known as Alexander the Great's father.

Attila the Hun

Christopher Kelly (Bodley Head) Keenly argued account of the rapacious warlord's assault on the Roman Empire.

Julius Caesar

Philip Freeman (JR Books) Caesar's life was lived on epic scale, as this detailed biography reveals.

Gods in Colour Opens at Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung

9 November 2008, Art Daily

http://www.artdaily.com/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=26818

The Archer and The Trojan Prince Paris from the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia on Aegina. Colour reconstruction of the original Greek marble executed between 500 and 470 B.C.



Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung presents Gods in Colour, on view through February 15, 2009. Antique marble sculpture was not white, but coloured. This is amply and overwhelmingly attested to by ancient literary sources. Whereas the incontestable fact that ancient sculpture was coloured was suppressed during the Italian Renaissance, it was recalled in the nineteenth century; in the twentieth century, it once again paled into insignificance, giving way to an aestheticism directed at clarity. Numerous traces of the original polychromy in antique sculpture have survived. They bear testimony to Greek and Roman statues having worn elaborately ornamented garments painted with precious pigments. For 25 years, an international team of scholars led by Vinzenz Brinkmann, head of the Collection of Antiques of the Liebieghaus, has been conducting research that has brought to light a multitude of new findings. The exhibition Gods in Colour has resulted from this research project. ... It juxtaposes some 70 originals - such as polychrome terracottas, marble statuary, and mummy portraits - with more than 30 spectacular reconstructions bringing "colourful antiquity" back to life. The highlight of the show in the Liebieghaus is a reconstruction of the so-called Persian Horseman from the Acropolis of Athens, whose colours have survived particularly well. It was especially made for the presentation in Frankfurt and will thus be shown for the first time.

In fact, one has always been able to read about it: the great writers of Greek and Roman antiquity report quite unambiguously and matter-of-factly about polychrome figures. The tragedian Euripides (c. 480-406 BC) picked a colourless marble statue as the image of extraordinary ugliness. When the Trojan War was unleashed because of a woman's beauty, Helen said to herself, "If I'd always been as ugly as a statue from which the colour has been wiped off, all this suffering would not have been brought down upon men." But many sources also testify to the fact that the subject of "colourful antiquity" used to be highly controversial in art history and archaeology. ...

The exhibition at the Liebieghaus visually demonstrates the findings of recent scientific polychromy research for visitors by means of more than 30 detailed colour reproductions and 70 selected original exhibits from international collections and the Liebieghaus's own holdings, thereby illustrating impressively the significance of colour for ancient sculpture.

Early Greek art from the so-called archaic period is essentially based on the achievements of Egyptian culture. In order to point out these parallels, the exhibition is introduced by a selection of multi-coloured Egyptian statues and reliefs from the rich holdings of the Liebieghaus. One of the show's focal points is early Greek marble sculpture, characterized by particularly elaborate and superb ornamentation. Magnificently decorated colourful garments, weapons, and tools served to enhance the aesthetic and narrative expression of objects. One of the most prestigious examples is the figure of an archer - the Trojan prince Paris - from the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina. This richly painted figure is displayed together with the Greek goddess Athena and the Greek archer Teukros. No less impressive is the figure of the Persian Horseman from the Athenian Acropolis, staged in the Liebieghaus's Tempietto. This early Greek work was scanned in a demanding 3-D process. On the basis of the data supplied, a full-size copy was made from a substance resembling marble (PMMA, crystalline acrylic glass). Analysis of the colour measurement carried out with the aid of UV-vis absorption spectroscopy delivered a highly differentiated picture of the pigments used. Whereas precious bright colours had been employed for the equestrian figure's elaborately decorated garment, the horse's mane, coat, tail, and hooves had been done in more subdued, earthy tones. The so-called Peplos Kore, the most famous portrayal of a girl in early Greek art, was executed around 530-20 BC, thus dating from about the same period as the Persian Horseman. Traces of red, blue, yellow, and green pigments have survived in the hair, eyes, belt, and garment of the original figure, which was discovered in 1880. Recent examinations in extreme side light have revealed further painted decoration. Originally, the statue wore an additional ritual garment elaborately embroidered with animals - which is proof that the figure does not actually depict an ordinary young woman, but a goddess, probably Athena or Artemis. Thus a new and spectacular interpretation has been made possible through the examination of the pigments.

Sent in by Robert Bowden

Last Resting Place of Crowe Gladiator Found

18 October 2008, Waikato Times

Italian archaeologists have discovered the tomb of the Roman hero who inspired Russell Crowe's character in the film *Gladiator*.

Daniela Rossi, a Rome archaeologist, said that the discovery of the marble tomb of Marcus Nonius Macrinus, which has an inscription bearing his name, was "the most important ancient Roman monument to come to light for 20 or 30 years". The tomb was found when archaeologists were asked to investigate ruins uncovered during building work on the banks of the Tiber at Saxa Rubra, on the Via Flaminia, north of Rome.

Cristiano Ranieri, who led the archaeological team, said that the tomb had long ago collapsed into the mud, but its columns, roof and decorations were intact. Some parts of the tomb had slipped into the river but had been recovered.

Marcus Nonius Macrinus, born in Brescia, northern Italy, was a general and consul who led military campaigns for Marcus Aurelius, Roman emperor from 161-180AD. He became part of the emperor's inner circle and one of his favourites, serving as proconsul in Asia. His patrician villa at Toscolano Maderno on Lake Garda has been identified and partially excavated.

In *Gladiator*, directed by Ridley Scott, he became Maximus Decimus Meridius, also portrayed as the emperor's favourite general. The screenwriters added a twist of their own, however, after the murder of Marcus Aurelius by his ambitious son Commodus (a fictional event) the general falls from grace and ends up in exile in North Africa. He later returns to Rome as a hardened gladiator to take revenge for the murder of his family and the emperor. Crowe won an Oscar for the role.

The archaeological find was presented at the Culture Ministry by Professor Bottini with new excavations on the Palatine Hill and the discovery of an imperial villa on the Via Aurelia and a necropolis adjoining the Stadio Flaminio rugby ground. There are thought to be plans to reconstruct the tomb as the centrepiece of a "Via Flaminia Archaeological Park", which would also include the House of Empress Livia, the wife of Emperor Augustus, nearby at the Prima Porta.

The character of Maximus also drew on accounts by Roman historians of a wrestler named Narcissus, who murdered the Emperor Commodus by strangling him, and the life of Spartacus, the leader of a revolt by slaves and gladiators in the 1st century BC.

5. ACA WEBSITE

www.classics.org.nz

If you have photos of classical sites which you would like to offer for the website, please send these to the Secretary for consideration. It will not be possible to use all photographs for the website as there are certain criteria which must be met (including rights to publication), and there is a size limit to the site, however all donations will be gratefully received and contributions not used for the website may well be utilised in other ways.

Also, if you have Greek or Latin phrases (and their translations), classical cartoons, or other things which could be of interest to our members and/or stimulate interest in non-members, please feel free to send these to the Secretary.

6. SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2009

The subscription for 2009 is \$20. This may be paid at a meeting or by mailing a cheque with this form to the Secretary at 52 Kohekohe Street, New Lynn, Waitakere 0600.

Membership is free for students and for graduates of less than one year's standing, however the return of the form would be appreciated in order to maintain the database of members.

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