Arch of Septimius Severus, Leptis Magna.

Photo: Courtesy of Ancient World Tours.

SEE PAGES 20 TO 23 FOR ITINERARY AND BOOKING FORM.
EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue 21 of ARA NEWS. It is not so large as the last issue but we are intending to publish a further NEWS in the late summer to include details of the AGM.

Once again we have an interesting mix of articles. The Treasurer includes details of last year’s accounts for those who missed the AGM and there is an update on web site information. Part three of Roman Cyprus is published and there is more to come! Yet a third Roman fort has been discovered in Cornwall – we are obviously becoming more adept at locating these lost sites.

Your board has worked hard to prepare the tours for the coming year and all Booking Forms are included. Two of the highlights for this year are the two-day Villa Conference in June, held in conjunction with the British Museum and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. It will be hosted by the British Museum. The second is the tour to Libya in November – your Director has worked extremely hard on this, to make it a really memorable occasion. Early booking for both is strongly recommended. There is a presentation on Libya by the tour operator, working on behalf of the ARA, and our members, Mr. and Mrs. Webb, have also supplied details from their visit of last year.

The other tours include the Annual Dinner, linked to a self-drive tour of Roman Wiltshire; the long Weekend Tour (the first of three) on the Saxon Shore Forts, and, by popular request, a further Walking Tour of London.

An exciting new mosaic has been found near Kemble, of which we shall no doubt hear more in the future; there is a short Archaeological Round-up, with more items held over for the next issue, and finally, a Book Offer for our younger members (or possibly the young at heart)!

A word about Membership. To enable the Association to continue to obtain the economies of scale we must endeavour to increase our Membership. Enclosed with this newsletter you will find two Membership Forms. Would each of you please pass these leaflets on to people who might have an interest in the Roman period, so that they too, have the opportunity to join our happy band.

New Membership Cards for 2009/10 are enclosed for those who pay by Standing Order; and for the remainder there is a Renewal reminder. It will help the administration if you can renew promptly, please.

Happy reading.

David Gollins,
Editor – ARA NEWS.
TREASURER’S REPORT

THE ARA WEB SITE

This has remained open at: http://www.associationromanarchaeology.org and we are still recording hits, enquiries and a small number of new members.

Regrettably, because of other commitments, we have been unable to proceed with some of the new enhancements we are planning, particularly the chat room. Colette Maxfield is still doing a sterling job maintaining the site, sorting out problems and updating the information, but it has become apparent over the past year that I simply do not have the time that I need to devote to the website. Under these circumstances, the Board has recommended that our new Trustee, Vix Hughes, should take over responsibility for the strategic development of the website and she will be undertaking this as from January 2009.

All other arrangements and procedures remain identical but if you need to contact Vix, she can be reached on:

hughesvix@hotmail.com

David Evans, January 2009.
THIRD ROMAN FORT FOUND IN CORNWALL

The search for an administrative centre associated with the medieval royal silver mines has unexpectedly led to the discovery of a hitherto unknown Roman fort high above the River Tamar. Between 2006 and 2008 the Bere Ferrers Project at the University of Exeter pieced together the archaeological and historical evidence for the landscape impact of the medieval industry on the Bere Peninsula south of Tavistock. While the mineral deposits were mined on the Devon side of the Tamar, thirteenth and fourteenth century accounts showed that ore was processed on the Cornish side, at Calstock, when wood there was allocated for the mines.

Geophysical survey carried out by Research Fellows Dr. Smart and Dr. Claughton around St. Andrew’s church was successful in locating a number of probable furnaces but also revealed the distinctive outline of a Roman fort, measuring approximately 160 m by 170 m, with double ramparts and double ditches. In January of this year (2008), Dr. Smart directed an excavation which confirmed the nature of the defences – a 5 m wide inner rampart followed by two V-shaped military ditches – each nearly 3 m deep from the current land surface, and an outer rampart (Fig. 1). The identification of a 30 cm square worked timber set into the inner rampart suggests that it was crowned by a timber palisade. The outer rampart is not a typical feature of forts in the South West and it is possible that this belongs to a later phase. An oven (Figs. 2 and 3) set into the inner rampart and a quern fragment from nearby give an insight into the daily provision of food for the army. Imported Gaulish Samian pottery was recovered, and shows that the fort was founded and used during the Flavian period, similar to other forts in Devon and Cornwall.

It is well known that the Tamar Valley is rich in mineral resources, and the excavation has provided keen evidence to suggest that this was one of the key factors in the placement of the fort. A furnace seen on the geophysical survey was located outside of the fort, with sherds of Samian pottery from associated deposits suggesting a Roman rather than medieval date (Fig. 4). Radiocarbon dating of charcoal from within the feature will determine this with certainty. Small amounts of ore and slag from a lower fill of the inner ditch are being analysed to see if local copper or lead-silver deposits were being exploited. The investigation of the medieval silver industry ‘Mining in a medieval landscape: the royal silver mines of the Tamar Valley’ is due to be published by Exeter University Press. Results of the initial work on Calstock Roman fort will be published independently in Cornish Archaeology.

A large-scale rescue excavation has been carried out by Exeter Archaeology in January and February 2009, the results of which are pending.

Dr. Chris Smart,
Exeter Archaeology,
Custom House,
The Quay, Exeter.

Dr. Chris Smart can be contacted by e-mail at: chris.smart@exeter.gov.uk
Continuing to explore the Roman aspects of southern Cyprus in this article, we now move some 30 miles further east along the coast from Paphos. The destination is KOURION (Curium) – a Roman town with a theatre, stadium and religious sanctuary in close proximity – a sheer pleasure to explore at leisure (Fig. 1).

Where appropriate, photos used in this article are from Ken Holt (a Lancashire member) and myself. Between us I would hope that we capture something of the atmosphere of this unique site.

As one approaches from the west and drops down from the motorway onto the minor road, one approaches the bluff upon which Kourion sits above the bay of Episkopi. We drive through the British Crown Territory and the first element of antiquity we come to is the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates – the God of the Woodlands – some 2 km from Kourion. This was one of the most important religious establishments in the whole of Cyprus between the eighth century BC and the fourth century AD, although most of the existing remains date from around AD 100. The western entrance to the precinct faced Paphos, the eastern one faced Kourion.

On the south side of the precinct are five contiguous rooms linked by a veranda along their façade – possibly used for the storage of votive offerings. From these buildings a long narrow sacred way stretches towards the northern end of the temenos where the Temple of Apollo is situated. The temple, a portico with four columns, has been partially rebuilt (Fig. 2). I really wish they would start work on restoring the other half.

Further east, towards Kourion, we come across the Stadium to the north of the road (Fig. 3). This was built around the second century AD and maintained until the fourth century. The retaining wall of this construction is most impressive, though the seating has been completely destroyed. It certainly illustrates the seriousness and enthusiasm which these peoples put into physical and athletic prowess. Ken’s photograph emphasises the large size of the construction with its original seating capacity of around 6,000.

Kourion Town itself occupies an impressive position on a rocky outcrop. As one approaches it from the stadium, the road passes the town’s western end with a small Roman building under a modern shelter to the right of the road, on the bend – the House of Achilles (see Fig. 16). Don’t stop here. The modern road carries on round the bluff, which lies to your right, and you enter the complex from the east, driving upwards to the theatre, now with its modern tourist reception – a big improvement on a few years ago.

The original Theatre (Fig. 4), over-
looking the bay, was probably built in the second century BC, was expanded in the second century AD and remodelled around the end of the second or early in the third century, for gladiatorial games, providing accommodation for some 3,500 people. Towards the end of the third century it reverted back to a proper theatre, but was finally abandoned in the fourth century. Nowadays, much restored, it serves as a venue for modern stage performances in idyllic surroundings.

A few metres to the east of this theatre, in a most impressive position overlooking the bay, lie the public baths, and close by, the Residence of Eustolius – a public benefactor to the town – built after the theatre was abandoned (Fig. 5). This was a Christian establishment, as several pro-Christian mosaics confirm. Apollo’s protection of the city is spoken of in the past tense and moreover, we find the phrase ‘This house is girt with the much venerated signs of Christ’ set out in the entrance mosaics.

The first visit I ever made to this site was a bus trip from Paphos, incorporating the customary visit to the local vineyard. This meant that all we had time to visit on this site was the theatre and, as the rest of this large town is just out of sight over a small hill, nothing else. It was only later that I realised what a large site this was, and what I had missed. In order to fully explore these sites one should be in charge of ones own destiny – in your own vehicle.

To the north-west, therefore, over a slight rise, lies the town centre proper, although evidence of habitation is to be found in all the surrounding areas. One such house, known as the Earthquake House (Fig. 6), is passed by the modern path running up to the town forum.

Early on the morning of July 21st AD 365 a powerful earthquake ripped across the eastern Mediterranean, levelling cities and killing thousands of people. One cannot mention Kourion without mentioning this earthquake damage.

Excavations in 1984 and 1985 produced the remains of a family and their house near to the town centre, exactly where they had been on that fateful morning. A young girl of around 13 years old and her mule were crushed by falling masonry. The mule was still tethered by its chain to a stone trough, which had been flung into a wall of the house. The woman’s neck was broken by falling stone and a baby was still clinging to her arm. The father, trying to protect his family from the falling stone, was buried under several 600-pound blocks of stone. The man had a ring inscribed with the chi-rho – this was a Christian family. A sobering introduction to the substantial town remains.

In précis, the Roman remains currently on show are of the forum, the substantial baths and nymphaeum and, on a ribbon development to the west, the houses of the Gladiators’ mosaics and of the Achilles mosaic. On the spur overlooking the sea is the fifth century Christian Basilica (Fig. 7), which rose from the earthquake ruins of the Roman city.

The first area we see is the large and impressive forum, still partly paved.
On the northern side (to the left of figure 7) is found a colonnaded stoa, built over a large Hellenistic cistern, partially filled with rubble. It is thought that a row of shops once covered the eastern part of this cistern.

To the rear of the forum area we face a large public building, behind which is a substantial Nymphaeum (Fig. 8).

Behind these remains are the extensive baths (Fig. 9), backing onto a hilly outcrop. One of the main problems facing Kourion must have been the provision of adequate water supplies to such a high site. The two main water sources were 11 and 22 kilometres away and traces of conduits and aqueducts suggest that it was piped in from beyond the Stadium towards the Building of Achilles and thence down to these baths. What massive baths they are – a complex of large cisterns and facilities, as Ken’s photograph shows.

Before leaving this area, on the side of the forum facing the sea, there are the remains of another most impressive fifth century Christian Basilica (Fig. 10), rising from the debris of the Roman town – a reflection at that time of the importance of Kourion in the Christian world, serving as it did, as a Cathedral for the first Bishops of Curium.

Moving to the west, down what can only be described as a minor ribbon development overlooking the sea, we come to the remains of several fine houses.

I have studied one of these for some time – that which I call the ‘Apsidal House’ (Figs. 11 and 12) – and have decided that I would personally have loved to have lived in it, and would still jump at the opportunity if it was ever rebuilt! You can probably appreciate my thoughts from these two views of the remains.

This house faces east and is built along a north/south road. The floor of the large reception room has an apse at the western end and is
Moving on towards the west, and at a lower level than the previous house, we visit the House of the Gladiators (Figs. 13 and 14). Kourion is quite famous for the two mosaics in this house which are now covered by a modern structure to protect these fine works of art from the elements. The house itself is obviously that of a rich patrician. The central courtyard is a peristyle with several column bases still in their original positions.

These are possibly the only mosaics showing Gladiatorial games in the Eastern Mediterranean. Figure 13 represents two fully armed Gladiators named Margaritas and Hellenikos engaged in a drill.

Figure 14 depicts a heavily armed gladiator named Lytras advancing on a (substantially damaged) opponent. Between the two is an unarmed figure named Darius, the referee of the dual.

Further on, near the modern road, are the remains of the Building of the Achilles Mosaic (Figs. 15 and 16). This is an open courtyard building. The portico has a large panel of pavement mosaic depicting Achilles disguised as a maiden at the court of King Lycomedes, thus unwittingly revealing his identity to Odysseus.

This brings us to the end of our speedy visit to the uncovered remains. The town was again destroyed by earthquakes in the fourth century but flourished once more in the Christian period when the ruins were used to create the Christian Basilicas. Kourion was finally destroyed by Arab invaders in the seventh century.

**In Conclusion**

A site well worth visiting. It should also be noted that a tour of this town would not be complete without a visit to the Museum of Kourion, in a two-storey building at Episkopi village. This house was the private residence of George McFadden, Assistant Director of the Kourion excavations. After his death in 1953 the building was donated for the purpose of a museum – in accordance with his wishes – as stated in his will.

Don Greenwood

**READING LIST**

1. The Cyprus Ancient Monuments by Vassos Karageorghis.
2. Kourion – its monuments by Demos Christou.
3. A Guide to Kourion by Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation
5. Kourion – the Search for a Lost Roman City by Soren and James.

Please see page 10 for an Apology by the Author.
Dear Editor

It was with great joy and nostalgia that I read ‘Impressive Villas over the Bay of Naples’ by Geoff and Glenis Long. I was reminded of visits to those villas. While in that area I visited the villa of POLLIIUS FELIX known as Bagni della Regina Guovanna which is at the southern most point of the Sorrento peninsula. This is a neglected and little visited site having no directional signs. I reached the site by local bus and a steep walk down a cobbled path while being buzzed by scooters. The cliffs at Punta del Capo are a favourite spot for fishermen who seem to be quite unaware of the villa’s remains. When I discussed the area with Bryn Walters and Mike Stone they told me that the locality contained many villas and a couple of temples. The site is also an inland harbour. If you are in the Bay of Naples vicinity, this fascinating complex is well worth a visit.

Patricia Lindsley.

View from villa of Pollius Felix, also known as Bagni della Regina Guovanna overlooking Sorrento Peninsula.

Photo: © Patricia Lindsley.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ROUND-UP

COLOSSAL STATUE OF MARCUS AURELIUS FOUND IN SAGALASSOS

Visitors to the Hadrian exhibition at the British Museum last year will remember the exquisite but colossal new portrait of the emperor that had recently been found in the frigidarium of the baths at Sagalassos in the mountains of southern Turkey. This has now been joined by a statue of Marcus Aurelius. The partial statue, with a one metre (3 ft) head, was discovered again in the frigidarium and it is now becoming apparent that the niches of this room were occupied by other members of the Antonine dynasty. So far Hadrian, his wife Sabina, Faustina the elder and her husband, Antoninus Pius, have also been identified. It seems that the emperors occupied the niches on the western side of the room whilst the empresses occupied those on the eastern. The statue of Marcus Aurelius should be accompanied by his wife, Faustina the Younger.

Only the heads and limbs of the statues survive as the bodies would have been made of wood and probably covered with metal armour or drapery. When complete the statues would have stood about 4.5 m (nearly 15 ft) tall. As the statues are without pedestals it is believed that they originally all stood on a continuous pedestal in a hall dedicated to the imperial cult, and that they were moved here at a later date when emperor worship was abolished. They are all made of expensive Domician marble brought from 250 km away. Sagalassos has yielded several colossal statues recently. The baths collapsed during an earthquake in the sixth or seventh century, burying the statues. Excavations are continuing.

news.bbc.co.uk
www.sagallasos.be <http://www.sagallasos.be>
VISIT TO THE GREEK AND ROMAN SITES OF LIBYA – APRIL 2008

We visited Libya in April this year. David Evans (ARA Hon. Treasurer) suggested it might be useful to record our impressions for the membership, and also provide some background information for those considering going on the ARA tour in 2009.

Our interest is primarily in history, rather than archaeology per se, so we are not able to provide a detailed report. In addition, while the guides provided a wealth of information we did not take notes, being too occupied with looking and taking photographs. On some days the wind would have made note taking difficult (see below).

Reactions to the sites in Libya may well be determined by your attitude to restoration. My own preference is for unadulterated ruins, I prefer the apparent randomness by which some buildings, such as the Greek temple at Segesta, or the Roman Basilica at Trier, have survived so well, whereas many more famous buildings, such as the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, survive only as their foundations. The Libyan buildings, such as those at Leptis Magna and Sabratha (see Fig. 1), now commonly seen in magazines, were restored (or rebuilt) during the Italian occupation during the 1920s and ’30s. However, that restoration appears to have been carried out quite sensitively (in contrast to the hideous perspex columns we saw last year in Rome close to the Colosseum), or perhaps time has softened the work. The mosaics are a different matter. Those on display have not been restored but have been preserved in situ.

Several museums also boast impressive displays of statues found on site.

The sites we visited were largely those on the ARA itinerary for 2009, and below we give a brief summary of our impressions of each site.

**Tripoli Museum**
Our lasting impressions are of the mosaics.

**Ptolemais**
Our first outdoor visit coincided with a hot wind, the Ghibli, blowing from the Sahara taking the temperature to 42°C. Curiously, despite the wind being hot, it still had a cooling effect, so the site visit was not as uncomfortable as might be expected. The main features of interest were the nine underground cisterns which provided the largest storage capacity yet found in North Africa. There is also a small but well-filled museum, exhibiting objects found on the site. The most impressive were some very fine Hellenistic mosaics which, at first appearance, looked like paintings (Fig. 2).

**Apollonia**
Our hotel, from which we were to visit Cyrene, was next door to the site of Apollonia, the port of Cyrene. In the late Roman period Apollonia became the administrative centre of Cyrenaica and the Governor’s palace may be seen, together with the remains of three churches, two of which had baptisteries for full (adult) immersion. A feature of all sites were columns made of four materials, local sandstone, a green striped marble imported from Thera, red/pink tinged granite from Aswan and white Carrerra marble.

Storage pits were also evident, apparently for garum as well as olive oil, both for export to Italy. Areas of the shore which had been quarried were also visible.

**Cyrene**
The first visit was to the temple of Zeus, the restored Doric columns were from the originals. The city suffered two great calamities in the Roman period. First the great Jewish revolt of AD 116-117 and then the earthquake of AD 365. The damage was largely repaired after the first, but not after the second. I had asked the guide at Apollonia, a retired archaeologist, the estimated population of ancient Cyrene. He reckoned that the ancient Greek colony may have numbered 20,000-22,000, but at its greatest extent the Roman city may have had a population of c. 700,000. This would be consistent with Gibbon’s report that during the revolt of AD 115-117 no less than 150,000 Greeks were massacred. I had suspected that figure to be exaggerated, but the city covers either an area of 66 km² or has a circumference of 66 km (notes would have been useful), so that figure may be correct. The guide told us that around 80% of the site has yet to be excavated.

Also very impressive were the gymnasium and the extensive baths. The whole site, on a hill with panoramic views of the surrounding countryside, is one of the best we have ever visited.
Some toes of a massive statue of Zeus are on display in the museum. It seems the temple may have been built around this statue.

Finally, we saw the still-flowing spring of Apollo, which some sources suggest the Delphic oracle proposed as the site for the colony, while others state that Cyrene was the third site occupied by the settlers, who were recommended to settle there by the local people who knew of the spring.

**Qasr Lebia**

The museum here is dedicated to the mosaics which made up the floor of a late Roman church. Ten of the 12 panels remain and are on display in the museum. It is tempting to see in the transition from the very fine mosaics of the Hellenistic period, through the coarser, but still impressive mosaics of the third and fourth centuries, to the rather naive pictures exhibited here, a decline in standards or ability (Fig. 3). However, this was perhaps a small church in an obscure town, hence the budget for decorating the church is likely to have been limited. The outstanding contemporary mosaics at Sabratha show what the artists of the late Roman period were capable of.

**Leptis Magna**

The site suffered considerable destruction from the earthquake of AD 365, and the pagan temples were not rebuilt. Most of the famous buildings were erected by Septimus Severus and his son Caracalla, to honour the city in which Septimus was born. The main buildings of note are the market place, extensive baths, basilica (Fig. 4), theatre and amphitheatre. The outline of the hippodrome can be seen, but most has been washed away by the sea.

Here too, about 75% of the site is still covered by sand. We were told that excavation ceased in 1975. This does not square with information presented at Ptolemais at which archaeologists from the University of Warsaw were active in the early part of this decade. Nevertheless, there was no evidence of any current excavations on the site, although since it covers such an extensive area, work may have been going on away from the areas visited.

**Sabratha**

Sabratha is a beautiful site, including the restored theatre, forum, basilica/church and extensive baths. The basilica was converted to a church in the late Roman period. Perhaps the most impressive are the mosaics from the late Roman church, removed and exhibited in the on-site museum. An example of one part of the floor is given in Figure 5. There are also some remnants of very fine mosaics (Fig. 6), similar to the Hellenistic fragments in Tripoli museum, including one of Bacchus and Ariadne. Some of the most impressive mosaics are currently on tour in Europe. If anyone has the opportunity to see them we recommend doing so. Sabratha also has very fine and extensive baths.

Another particularly interesting feature is the surviving evidence for the way in which rainwater was collected from the roofs of houses and stored in cisterns; we were shown one domestic cistern around 8 m deep, with hand holds still visible to enable climbing into the cistern to clean it.

As with Apollonia and Leptis Magna, from the late Roman period a wall is evident, which only encloses a small proportion of the city. As we have seen in other Roman cities, (for example – Side in Turkey) in the late period the Romans were indiscriminate in their plundering of ancient buildings to erect walls or
I was visiting sites on Hadrian’s Wall – an area which has drawn me back many times – for its atmosphere affects me always with its upstanding remains of the wall forts, some excavated, some partially and some just grassy humps and mounds in fields. There were several forts built far forward of the wall – as listening posts if you like – in hostile territory. One such was High Rochester or Bremenium to give it its Roman name.

It was dug in Victorian times – poorly in my opinion. However, I climbed the steep slope up to its ramparts expecting to see much but once inside, there was desolation and ruin, made worse for me by a booklet published by a chap called R. Embleton who states and I quote: “Bremenium is one of the finest forts in Britain and is of great strategic interest”. I could agree with the second part of his statement but certainly not the first.

That aside, I found the whole experience depressing with tumbled overgrown stonework making identification of features impossible. Whilst mooning around I was suddenly aware of someone looking over my shoulder – it was a chap in full Roman uniform. I asked him who he was – expecting something like George or Joe Bloggs thinking he was a re-enactor. He said his name was Rufinius and his tombstone was in a nearby church at Elsdon but was far from its original position. I nearly said, “Get away and pull the other one” but something stopped me and I shivered. At this stage it hadn’t sunk in as to who or what I was dealing with but I began to feel very cold. He said, “Can I tell you more?” I swallowed hard and said “Yes.” I sat down on some protruding stonework.

He went on, “My wife was a lady of high rank being a Senator’s daughter” and he told me what his wife’s memorial stone said and his as well. Apparently it was the only one in Roman Britain detailing his life as a Roman officer. I only remember snatches of what he told me as by now I was transfixed with fear. He, or it, told me of his long service in the Roman army which had taken him from Mauritania, Egypt. Then he held two posts as a civil servant in charge of the Flaminian Way (Roman road in Italy), then in charge of the corn dole in Rome and then as a sub-contractor of public works in Rome. Then came his last posting to a place the Gods forgot – Bremenium in Britannia. He was a member of the XX Legion. The XX had moved around Britannia and some parts of the Legion were posted to the Wall. Rufinius was posted to Bremenium as Commanding Officer – the cohort was the I Vardullorum Milliara.

Now, as I said earlier I cannot elaborate, but he did go into much more detail, but what did stick in my mind was this. I did manage to blurt out what was his wife doing at a benighted place such as Bremenium. Well, it appears that men of high rank were allowed to have their wives with them, whereas the ordinary soldier was not even allowed to marry until they had done their twenty-five years service, although it was common practice for many of them to have what we
would call common law wives in the local villages. The Commander's house was the only building in a fort to have heated floors.

His wife's name was Julia Flaminia Clarisma but, while she was a loyal wife and put up with the constant rain and low cloud which would envelop the fort in a white clinging mist like a wet blanket, she was constantly asking her dear husband to get another posting. He could not, for it was a matter for the General in charge of the Wall at Stanwix (Carlisle). Then he said that Julia contracted a very bad chest infection which worsened quickly. I looked at him and he was weeping. She died in his arms.

He said thereafter all the spirit went out of him. He ordered a tomb to be erected in the cemetery that lay alongside the road from the fort and had the inscription about his wife carved on it. He told me that after Julia's funeral he could not regain the air of authority that a Commanding Officer should have, so he applied again to Stanwix, the headquarters fort on the wall, for a replacement. Eventually his request was granted and the day when his replacement was due to arrive he lay down on his bed and cut his wrists—letting the blood drip into two bowls.

I dared to ask him, through chattering teeth, why his restless spirit still roamed the fort. He said that robbers had destroyed their tomb and he didn't know where his wife's remains were. I couldn't say a thing. By now it was raining hard and I was wet through and freezing in spite of it being a mild day. I looked up at him—it was gone! Oh my God. Oh my Lord, The figure had looked as solid as you or I.

I fled the ruins. I shan't go back to that melancholy place which had been the end of his long journey. Mine I hope, is not over yet. When I got back to my hotel I had a hot bath and a couple of stiff whiskies. Then it sunk into my addled brain that he had been speaking in Latin, and I had never been taught Latin at school, but I had understood him. Later, when I had calmed down, I asked tentatively at the bar if anyone knew if High Rochester was haunted but no one knew. "Why do you ask?" said one of my fellow drinkers. I shrugged and replied that I had been up there and found the place had such a melancholy atmosphere and it gave me the creeps.

I wonder if Rufinius approached me in the hope that I would do some research to find out where his dear wife's remains are now!

Howard Gibbs

**NEW FIGURED MOSAIC FOUND NEAR KEMBLE**

Paul Ballinger and John Carter have discovered a new and exciting mosaic during a sweep of a ploughed field between Kemble and Cirencester in Gloucestershire. The ploughing unfortunately must have damaged the mosaic as they were first alerted to its existence by a line of tesserae on the top soil. Opening up a metre square hole they discovered part of a floor decorated with an animal and a section of guilloche border. The latter appears to be gently curving. If this is indeed the case and it is not simply an ill drawn straight line then this may be another example of an Orpheus mosaic with a parade of beasts and birds circling the musician. So far this is the only part of the floor to have been uncovered. From an initial look at the photograph released to the press I would say that the uncovered section shows the front left leg of a griffin with the right leg probably raised. The paw looks leonid but also has bird-like features. The leg appears too long and sinewy for a lion or panther. It is also very straight and upright which makes me think it probably is not by the Woodchester Orpheus artists who seem to have more slanted movement in their plodding figures' limbs. There are a couple of curving lines on the torso that may be the lower part of a wing. Time will tell no doubt, and hopefully at least an enlargement of the sounding will take place even if the full excavation is not possible. If, as it appears, the guilloche border is curving, then it should of course be possible to calculate the size of this section of the floor at any rate. Press claims that it approaches in size the Woodchester pavement should be discounted before further investigation takes place. The white ground behind the figure is enlivened with an ivy scroll. The only real alternative at the moment to this being an Orpheus mosaic is that it shows two panthers or griffins like chimaeras either side of a cantharus and set either in some circular design or in a badly delineated rectangle. The famous frieze from the forum of Trajan in Rome showed winged chimaeras with raised paws receiving libations of wine. The finding of figured mosaics in Britannia is always an event to celebrate and this example appears particularly intriguing.

Comment by Anthony Beeson.

Metro—22.01.2009

The figured mosaic section as found by Paul Ballinger and John Carter. Photo © Paul Ballinger.
THE HEAD IN THE RIVER

In 1907 a life-size bronze head was recovered from the River Alde in Suffolk, by two boys mud-larking (Figs. 1 and 2). It is thought to represent the Emperor Claudius, and formed part of an equestrian statue that had been standing in Colonia Victricensis, present day Colchester, prior to the tribal revolt of AD 60/61, led by Boudica, queen of the Iceni.

The statue head had been hacked from the main body of the bronze to become a portable object of plunder during the sacking of the colonia, returning with the rebel looters to an Iceni territory.

If it is assumed that any plundered metals were forged into weapons by the victorious tribesmen, then why not this head? How did it end up in the silt of the River Alde?

Explanations for the head’s riverine deposit are few. Hidden from Roman eyes once the rebellion failed, it has been put forward as a votive offering given to the river. This religious aspect, I suggest, can be taken a step further. The Celts revered the human head; it was seen as the seat of spiritual power, and having decapitated an enemy, they were known to attach the head to their waist or to their property. The Iceni

saw, in the bronze head of Claudius, an image of the dead Emperor who had now been captured. With this reverence in mind, I suggest that the head, being far too important to discard, was displayed as a trophy and stuck onto a stake which had been driven into the riverbed.

Within a short distance of the discovery point, an ancient causeway, today a footpath, crossed the river and adjacent water meadows. This possibly linked the Iceni to the tribal territory of the Trinovantes, and being an ideal location to display the prowess of the Iceni, human skulls might well have lined the causeway, with the image of the Roman Emperor used as a focal piece.

With the rebellion defeated, the untended staked bronze, weathered and heavy, soon fell into the concealing silt of the river, not to be seen again for almost 2,000 years.

A note of interest – Arthur Godbold, one of the boys who found the bronze head, having taken it home, proceeded to whitewash it and stuck it on a post in his garden, for passers-by to witness the find!

Kevin Cooke.

Fig. 1. Front view of the bronze head from the river Alde, clearly showing where it was hacked from the main statue.

Photo: © Grahame Soffe.

EARLY BUST OF JULIUS CAESAR FOUND

A marble bust dated to around 46 BC and tentatively identified as that of Julius Caesar has been found in the River Rhône by divers working on an underwater site at Arles in France.

The life-size portrait is claimed to be the oldest representation of Caesar known, dating from just before his stabbing in the Senate in Rome. Caesar founded Arles in 46 BC, two years before the assassination. The identification of the balding, figure has been challenged by other archaeologists.

Daily Mail – 15.5.2008

ABONA AUSTRALIS; AN UNKNOWN FORT AT SEA MILLS?

The tantalising prospect that Abona (Sea Mills) on the Avon, at Bristol, once had a large legionary fort on the southern side of the river opposite to the known site and harbour, has been raised by David Higgins in an article in the CBA’s Archaeology South West.

The idea originated with the late Keith Gardner and was based on an RAF aerial photograph (CPE/UK/2472 of 9th March 1948–3003). The interpretation of the photograph shows a fort approximately 360 × 323 m (400 × 350 yards) about half the size of a legionary fortress like Caerleon, in the undeveloped fields opposite the Bristol suburb.

Interestingly, this putative fort lies at the end of the Roman road to the heavily walled complex at Gatcombe in Somerset, that Gardner also traced. The photograph even gives a hint of an amphitheatre outside the walls of the fort. The article postulates that the known Sea Mills site became the working port whilst the southern site grew into the 'respectable suburb'. The same issue of the journal contains a review of Sea Mills dock, by James Russell.

"Abona (Sea Mills) and Abona (Leigh Court)" by David Higgins.
CBA Archaeology South West.
Members will notice the substantial difference in the final cost of this tour compared with that given provisionally in the last edition of ARA NEWS (issue 20). A great deal of this is due to the present international financial downturn and the poor state of the pound sterling against other currencies. This was not foreseeable when we went to press with last year’s notice. Nevertheless, the tour is still extremely good value for the money and travel details for this type of tour have to be arranged through an experienced and reputable tour agency. Members should also be aware of all the services provided on these ARA tours. There are similar ones with other companies, which are much more expensive, and others which are much cheaper advertised in the national press; quite frequently these do not provide quality hotels at prime locations and very often no transport to sites with a qualified English speaking scholar to explain specific details. Such budget priced tours should not be compared to those arranged by the ARA.

Unlike our home based summer tours, this excursion must be restricted to one coach, therefore numbers will be limited and it is recommended that bookings are made with ‘Ancient World Tours’ as soon as possible. (see Reservations Information on page 22). We hope that the tour will be accompanied by Tony King, Professor of Archaeology at Winchester University, with whom many members are already acquainted; if Tony is unable to join the tour another professional specialist on Libya will be appointed.

However, we must point out that the tour will be strenuous and fast moving on the sites, with some areas of rough ground and a great deal of walking. Members who may have a physical problem should be aware of this, as we have experienced difficulties in the past with parties being held up or delayed.

Without question the ancient sites in Libya are breathtaking, and in the main, being set along the coast, very often with a backdrop over the Mediterranean, the majestic splendour of the architecture of the ruins is truly enhanced. This is undoubtedly a journey of a lifetime. In ancient times North Africa was exceedingly rich in grain, and later for the Romans, in olives. Its principal cities, especially those along the coast, developed with the Saharan trade from the south, which brought gold, ivory, slaves, and for the Roman circuses, show animals from central Africa. The early trade was developed by the Phoenicians whose coastal settlements would grow into splendid cities like Leptis Magna which in AD 109 was raised to the rank of a Roman colonia and in the reign of Hadrian was graced with a public baths built on an imperial scale. It was however in the reign of its most distinguished son Septimius Severus that the city was graciously endowed with magnificent buildings. Severus was born at Leptis and died in York, but he lavished on the city wealth and artistry far beyond its true status, both economically and politically. Some distance outside the central area of the city on its western fringe is the famous ‘Hunting Baths’ its vaulted roofs being preserved by the drifting sands. A wall painting in the principal hall implies that the baths were erected for a guild of hunters, whose trade was
to supply the wild beasts to both local and overseas arenas. Leptis is only but one of the splendid sites which will be visited in this spectacular tour.

**General Itinerary:**

**Day One:** Fly from London Heathrow by British Airways (9.25 am) to Tripoli, arrive approximately (3.00 pm). We will be met by coach for transfer to **Thobacts Hotel** only 200 metres from the sea, for dinner and overnight stay. Late afternoon and evening at leisure.

**Day Two:** In the morning we transfer to an internal flight at 10.00 am (Libyan Arab Airlines) to Benghazi. On arrival (approximately 12.30 pm) check into **Tibesty Hotel** in Benghazi for dinner and overnight stay. There will be an option to make a short visit to the Soukh.

**Day Three:** With luggage packed we take a morning drive to **Apollonia**, visiting en route the Greek city of **Tocra** and later ancient **Ptolemais** (Tolmeita) with its splendid ruins including the columned Palace, the theatre and the underground Cisterns. Then on to **Apollonia** for dinner and overnight stay at the **Al Manara Hotel**, which is close to the magnificent ruins of **Apollonia** overlooking the glittering waters of the Mediterranean. The site was one of the most important ancient ports along this coast.

**Day Four:** After breakfast we board the coach for a visit to **Cyrene** set in the lush pine covered slopes of the Jebel Akhdar Highlands. Founded as a Greek colony, it is second only to Leptis Magna for its archaeological significance, becoming one of the largest of the ancient cities in North Africa, reflecting the influences of its Greek, Roman and Egyptian rulers. Included in the visit will be the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Greek Baths, the Forum, Temple of Zeus and the Triumphant Arch. Return to **Apollonia** for dinner and overnight.

**Day Five:** We return to Benghazi via **Qasar Libya**, famed for it collection of Byzantine mosaics. At Benghazi we fly back to Tripoli and the **Hotel Thobacts**. There will be a short tour in the city before dinner.

**Day Six:** After breakfast, depart for a full day visit to **Leptis Magna** 100 kms east of Tripoli, one of the best preserved cities from the ancient world, hidden for centuries beneath the drifting desert sands, with its famed Baths of Hadrian, the Severan Basilica, the Arch of Septimius Severus, the Street of Columns, the Punic and Roman Markets, the Theatre overlooking the sea, the Amphitheatre and the famous Hunting Baths. Nothing can be understated here as **Leptis** offers a unique insight into the power and wealth of the Roman Empire. After visiting **Leptis Magna**, we will stop en route back to Tripoli to visit the lovely **Villa Selene** with its fine mosaics, overlooking the Mediterranean.

**Day Seven:** Sightseeing around the capital including the National Museum located in the formidable ‘Red Fort’, with its vast collection of artefacts from the Punic, Greek and Roman periods. Then by coach out of the city to the beautiful ruins of **Sabratha** one of the great trading cities of the Carthaginians and later of ancient Roman Tripolitania. The Roman theatre is one of the finest in the Roman Empire, standing elegantly above the backdrop of the sea. There is also the museum with a fine collection of mosaics from the city. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

**Day Eight:** With all luggage packed for transfer, we make a morning visit to the Janzur Museum, en route to the airport for the British Airways flight back to Heathrow, departing at 2.00 pm and arriving back at Heathrow around 6.00 pm.

For details on making a booking see the Reservations Information on page 22.

See the front cover for a picture of the Arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna.