

November 2013

Volume 6

FGRS NEWSLETTER



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We begin this edition of the FGRS newsletter by thanking two people especially for their enthusiastic support of Greek and Roman Studies at Carleton: our patron His Excellency, Eleftherios Anghelopoulos, the Ambassador of the Republic of Greece, and John Osborne, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

Greece will hold the Presidency of the European Union from January 2014, and we know that His Excellency would like to celebrate this event in a special way. In the summer of this current year, John Osborne was invested as a Cavaliere of the Ordine al Merito della Repubblica Italiana by the Italian Ambassador for his exceptional research contributions to the study of Italian medieval material culture. This is the Italian equivalent of a British knighthood. We offer John our heartiest congratulations.

In this issue as well as notices of forthcoming events, including the play reading of Euripides' *Medea*, there are two main feature articles: one by Jeremy Roberts on the course Roman Britain and Gaul – this field trip was organised by Dr. Greg Fisher; the other a memoir by Dr. Ray Clark about his teacher, the Vergilian Scholar, W.F. Jackson Knight.

This is a new kind of feature article, and if anyone else has some ideas along the same lines, please let the editor know. In fact, the editor is feeling increasingly lonely in his old age, since he never receives any written responses to these newsletters.



Roman Britain & Gaul Trip Summer 2013

By Jeremy Roberts

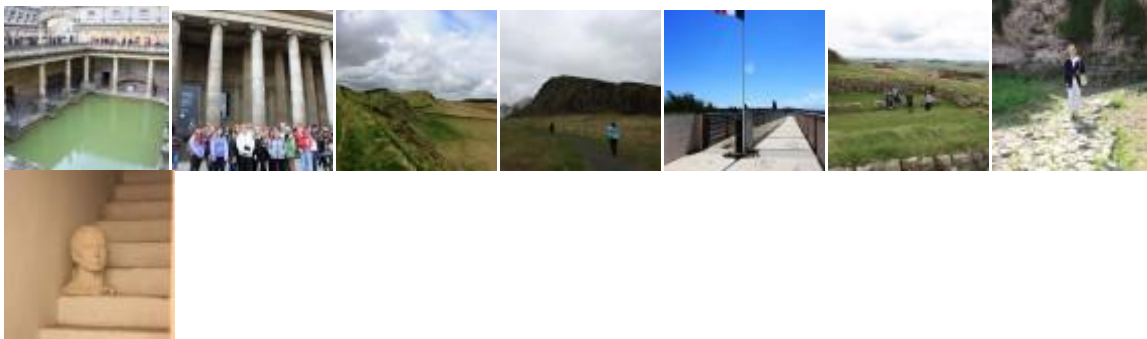
During the summer of 2013 the Greek & Roman Studies Department ran a trip to explore Roman Britain and France (Gaul). The trip began in Edinburgh, Scotland, where we visited the newly opened [National Museum of Scotland](#). Heading south on what would be a whirlwind tour, we visited Hadrian's Wall at [Housesteads](#), where we were able to explore the 2000-year-old structure. We also visited the ruins of the Roman city at [Vindolanda](#) and concluded the day at the nearby [Roman Army Museum](#).

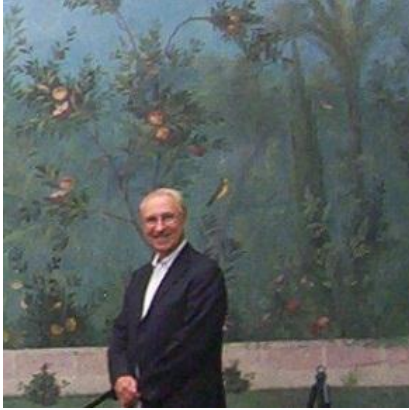
Our trip then took us to London where, along with some touristy sight-seeing, we visited the [British Museum](#) to examine their extensive Roman galleries. From London, we headed down to the coast to visit [Portchester Castle](#), an ancient Roman and Norman fortification, and to see the beautiful mosaics at the ruins of a Roman villa at [Bignor](#). Naturally, no Roman-geared visit to Britain would be complete without seeing the fascinating ruins in [Bath](#), where once the Romans relaxed in the warm and healing waters.

Finishing the British leg of the trip our group hopped on a train to Paris. Here, we were given free-rein to explore the city. Some visited the marvellous palace of [Versailles](#). Others examined the residual impact of the Romans by visiting the tombs at the basilica of [St. Denis](#) and the marvellous [tomb of Napoleon](#). From Paris, we headed to the cradle of civilization – the Mediterranean. Basing ourselves in Nice we visited a number of nearby sites, including the impressive amphitheatre in [Arles](#), the majestic aqueducts at [Pont-du-Gard](#), and the ancient city of [Frejus](#), founded by Julius Caesar himself.

The formal trip concluded at the [Archaeological Museum in Nice](#), built next to the ruins of the old Roman city.

The trip gave us each a deeper understanding of the far-reaching influence of the Roman Empire. By visiting ancient sites, we were able to gain a tangible grasp on what we have been studying. Moreover, we each gained a greater appreciation for the rich and diverse cultures we encountered along the way.





Profile

Dr. Ray Clark, since retiring from Memorial University, has taught several courses at Carleton. We asked him if he would share some reminiscences of his famous teacher, the Vergilian Scholar, W.F.Jackson Knight who did the original Penguin translation of the *Aeneid*.

W.F. Jackson Knight, Vergilian scholar

Jackson Knight gave the very first lecture I attended at the University of Exeter, England, and the course was Vergil. Fast footsteps raced along the corridor, two sets of them. The first set swooshed past our open lecture door. The second stopped suddenly at the doorway. “In here, Mr Knight.” It was a security guard. Jackson Knight must have asked him to lead him to the room where he was to teach. But typically Jackson Knight then overtook him. Upon the “in here,” the first set of footsteps turned sharply and rounded back to the open door. In and across the room to the far window rushed the man himself in white gloves, bow tie, and a monocle clenched in one eye from which a grand loop of a chain hung from his waistcoat. He was carrying a whole pile of newspapers and reciting poetry. He then stepped several steps back and fell backwards over the raised platform. Out flew the monocle, and the newspapers scattered. “That’s the 33rd time I’ve fallen backwards over that platform,” he yelled from the floor. “Hello, I’m JK, brother of the famous G. Wilson Knight, the Shakespearian scholar,” he declared. The headmaster of my high school had advised me to study at Exeter, “where there is a famous Mr Knight who is knowledgeable about Vergil.” I remember wondering, at that moment of my first undergraduate lecture, what kind of man was it to whom I was committing my career? In the event, it proved that he influenced my outlook enormously. He taught me in his last year before retirement.

Somehow every lecture was an event, usually beginning with lateness that added to the grand entry. On one occasion I was late myself and had to cross a road to where the lecture room was. Despite my rush, I paused on the curb because in the distance, was it really JK on the back of a motorcycle wearing his wrinkly brimmed hat that resembled something I had seen on a Greek pot? It was. He had hitched a ride from a student. I waited to see him pass and waved. As the motorbike whizzed by, he shouted out, “I’ll bet you’re always late for my lectures!” I got there before him. Sometimes he carried a brown parcel to lectures, and a student asked him what was in it. “Ah,” said he, “I wish I knew! I once did,” he added, “but then I forgot. But what I do remember is that it is very important and that I should never open it. And now I may never know!”

He saw the world rather oddly, which makes him a perfect fit for understanding Vergil. In the *Eclogues* a shepherd offers flowers to his lover. He doesn’t say, “Look, here are baskets of flowers for you.” He says, “look, here are flowers in full baskets!” Odd really, but more accurate. The same shepherd has a Pan-pipe which he inherited from the dying Damoetas. Damoetas didn’t say, “Now you can be the second owner of it.” No, he says, “Now the pipe owns you second.” What great thought lies behind that, JK would have said. Whoever owns the pipe, so marvellous the sound that it produces, will in no time become its slave.

His book *Roman Vergil* appeared before his Penguin *Aeneid*, and he wrote it hastily—he told me in six weeks—in 1939-40 when he was expecting military appointment. The book’s range is immense from the world before Vergil to the poet’s own life and his place within the traditions of antiquity, the relation between poetic form and reality taking account of the world of nature, human society and historical background, and then Vergil’s language, verse and style, manuscripts, and the poet’s influence. JK’s focus upon the semantic penumbræ of Vergilian words and phrases and whole passages is impressive. He showed how Vergil worked to give new meaning to inherited poetry. Today it is called intertextual criticism. In lectures he compared Vergil’s art to the sorcerer’s refrain in the story of Aladdin’s lamp, “new lamps for old.” JK’s point was that Vergil really

could by the mere hint of a word or a phrase turn old poetry into new and imbue age-old traditions, going back to Homer and Hesiod and a host of other ancient writers, with new meaning. The book made him a prominent figure in British culture and he gathered interest from many scholars, and even poets like T.S. Eliot, over his thought that in war-torn Europe Vergil may have a message for the modern world: the poet of war with a vision for peace. As such he was instrumental in the foundation of the British Virgil Society.

JK could be impish. When he first invited me to his home, which was actually his brother's, I knocked on the door and upon it being opened, the voice shouted, "Come in." I duly obeyed, but JK yelled, "Mind the cat!" Freezing to a halt, I asked, "Where is it?" "Well," he said, "it happens not to be there. But it might have been."

On another occasion he invited me together with my future wife Vivien. This time his brother was there. "Meet my brother Dick," he said, "a preparatory math teacher." Preparatory schools in England in those days had pupils going up to 8 years old. Only after JK's death did I learn that this was actually his famous brother G. Wilson Knight CBE with many honorary doctorates, and the author of numerous books on English literature. Yet JK introduced him as the preparatory school math teacher, which indeed he had been briefly, thirty eight years earlier, in 1923. Moreover, "Dick" was not even his name. But this is what JK called his new brother when he learned his parents planned to call him George Wilson Richard Knight. Upon hearing JK's nickname the parents dropped the Richard before he was formally named, but JK persisted in introducing him as "Dick" throughout his life.

One day, I saw JK waiting for a bus in a queue and I stopped to chat. When the double decker came, everybody in the queue got on except JK, who kept the bus waiting several minutes as he stood on the sidewalk near the sole entrance-exit at the rear of the bus while he kept on waving and thanking me for such an interesting conversation. Afraid that the bus would leave without him, I then stood in front of it, indicating to the continuously beeping driver to wait, whereupon JK turned to bowing over and over now thanking me for not letting him miss it. Meanwhile the conductor kept asking whether he was going to get on the bus or not. He finally got on, white gloves waving from the entrance as the bus passed by. On another occasion—there were no folding doors on bus entrances in those days in England, only a pole in the middle of the entrance to assist passengers mount or dismount either side of it—I saw him holding onto the pole and swivel right round it, legs flying in the air, as his bus went at speed round a roundabout.

The poet and future poet laureate of England C. Day Lewis, father of the Oscar winning actor Daniel Day Lewis, said JK had a high-pitched voice with "the sound of a demented seagull," which he explains as "an alternating of enthusiasm and moodiness." Yes, JK had such a voice. But he also had a resonating, deeper voice, which was at its best when he recited Vergil, full of emotion. I even saw him doing this at the top of a stairwell, packed with students while changing lecture rooms. When Day Lewis was commissioned by the BBC to make a verse translation of the *Aeneid*, he asked if he could have JK as his academic advisor. The future poet laureate wrote that at the end of every book, JK would visit him for two days and that he would be treated to a "scintillating and profound discourse ... on the exact meaning of every line, every word almost, from every conceivable angle—poetic, etymological, mythical, historical, geographical, mystical etc., etc. The discourse," Day Lewis continued, "enthralled me: I had never been so close to the mind of a great scholar."

JK's lectures were like that. They were totally spontaneous—or so it seemed to us. He would talk *extempore* and brilliantly on whatever occurred to him. One day, he was silent for a good ten minutes. He walked up and down between us from the front to the back of the lecture room. Then he swivelled round and said, "I'll bet you think I'm wasting your time!" "Yes JK, the thought had crossed our minds," said someone. "Well," he said, "You're mistaken. You see, I'm thinking very hard how *not* to waste it!" His lectures were extraordinary—students from other disciplines sometimes came in just to see what they were like, because JK was known across the campus. My wife studying biology had even come across him to chat to before she met me. He was known among students as The White Knight because he was a spiritualist. He was an eccentric extrovert, yes, but one who was extraordinarily generous with his time and his help and he always saw good in his students.

He's the only person I know of who wrote the same book twice! When I left university with my BA, I taught in a school for two years and had already discussed the possibility of a PhD. He asked me to visit him when I next returned to Exeter, which I did. I was met at the front door by his brother "Dick," who told me he was seriously ill. "Please don't keep him long," he said, "because he has only one or two clear hours a day and I want him to finish the book he's writing before he goes." I went up to his bedroom. He was sat up in bed in his pyjamas typing upon a manual typewriter rested on his knees, with not a note or book in sight. He was typing straight out of his head. He died soon after, in 1964, but completed a typed MS of his book on "Ancient Greek and Roman Beliefs concerning Life after Death." I remember the excitement on the face of his brother when I returned to do my PhD, and he told me that when he went through two large waist-high tea-chests of JK's papers and possessions, he found that he had already written some 50 pages of his book five years previously, and he wondered if JK had forgotten that. In the introduction to the book published posthumously, I find a slightly sanitized version of events, which mentions that JK had independently written the same material twice, but does not raise the question of why. It is odd that he never bothered to consult the earlier version, given that he was in a race against time. Or perhaps he wrote two versions to intrigue and surprise his brother and leave a puzzle. He loved to tease. But here's a remarkable fact. Where the two independently written versions overlap, as they do in many whole paragraphs, paragraph after paragraph, for numerous consecutive pages, the earlier version, being more thought-out, has better links joining one paragraph to the next. The second version, being written at speed in the bedroom, was pithier, more succinct, but less well joined paragraph to paragraph. So quite a lot of the book's 135 pages was put together by using the pithier second version as the basis, with the links taken from the earlier version to make it smooth. The whole was somewhat expanded by inserting material taken from his already published articles on the subject. I myself worked on the footnotes.

On the day I left him in the bedroom, I was waving goodbye as I was leaving, and quite out of the blue—his remarks had nothing to do with our earlier conversation—he shouted, "Caves! Remember Caves!" I said I would bear it in mind and I wished him "Bye, bye, JK." That was our last conversation. But, you know, it's an uncanny thing, and it shows the influence our teachers can have. I've subsequently written three articles on caves, caves carved by the Greeks and Romans in Southern Italy in the sixth and first centuries BC.

Raymond J. Clark

Events

Upcoming GRS Events at Carleton

CAC Lecture:

Wednesday, November 6 at 6 pm in Paterson Hall 303. **John Oleson** will speak on:

“Harena sine calce (“Sand without lime”): Building Disasters, Incompetent Architects, and Construction Fraud in Ancient Rome”

John Peter Oleson, an archaeologist and Classics scholar, is Distinguished Professor in the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria, Canada, where he has taught since 1976. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and a Board member of the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman.

13th annual dramatic reading of a Greek tragedy:

Wednesday, November 13 at 8 pm in Paterson Hall 303, *Medea* by Euripides.

AIA Lectures:

7:00 PM, Thursday, November 21, 2013

Barney Danson Auditorium, Canadian War Museum

Protecting the Pink Bits:

The Development of the Martello Tower and Its Role in the Defence of Kingston Harbour

Joseph Last, Parks Canada (ret'd.)

AIA Ottawa in partnership with the Ontario Archaeological Society and the Canadian War Museum

A decade of archaeological excavations was undertaken to stabilize Kingston's Victorian tower defences. Last of a long tradition, the towers are considered the most sophisticated examples of Martello construction to be found in Canada, or elsewhere. As such, they provide a means to appreciate the lineage of tower development that once graced the shores of the British Empire. Given their varied state of preservation, their differing historic landscape treatment, and range of occupational use, the Martellos of Kingston are once again working in concert to tell the story of their defensive function, their innovative design, their past occupants, and their present role in the Kingston community.

Joseph H. Last holds a Masters of Art Conservation degree from Queen's University and a M.A. in Anthropology (specializing in Historical Archaeology) from the College of William and Mary. From 1977 - 2011, he worked with Parks Canada, as artefact conservator, Project Archaeologist for Military Sites, Ontario Region and Senior Archaeologist for Military Sites for Parks Canada Ontario Service Centre. His primary research focus has been on 19th century British fortifications in Canada and elsewhere. Major interests involve military engineering, architecture, relationships of fort and community (both past and present), cultural resource management, and site interpretation.

Tuesday, March 18, 2014

Hellenic Community Centre, Prince of Wales Drive

Lost City Found: Plataiai

R. Marchese, Emeritus,

University of Minnesota, Duluth

Sheppard Lecture 2014

AIA Ottawa in partnership with the Parnassos Hellenic Cultural Society, Canadian Institute in Greece (Ottawa Chapter)

Over the course of the last few years a number of major archaeological discoveries have captured the interests of scholars, scientists, and the general public. One of the most fascinating questions is “how does an entire ancient city get lost” and how does it merely disappear”. The most common answer is that it is “just forgotten”. The question also pertains to those sites that are discovered and assumed to have no major physical remains either evident above ground or through ancient commentary from the past. This is clearly seen in the recent re-discovery of the ancient city of Plataiai, discovered in the 1750s but forgotten due to a lack of interest after very little exploration in 1889. One of the very first sites explored by the American School of Classical Study (1879), recent research and the employment of geo-physical survey methodologies has yielded an impressive city of substantial importance, festivals, and the third largest market place in the ancient world.

Ron Marchese was co-director of the excavations at Plataiai from 1999-2009 carried out by the Austrian Institute of Archaeology and the Thebes Archaeological Museum, The University of Minnesota-Cambridge University-University of Vienna-Thebes Archaeological Museum. He has also worked on archaeological surveys in Russia and Turkey and excavated in Israel and Turkey. Author of numerous books and articles, he is the recipient of awards for two recent books on textiles and relics from Armenian Orthodox churches in Istanbul. He is recently retired from the University of Minnesota where he is now Professor Emeritus.

Editor
Josh Beer

Donations

This newsletter is circulated to all friends *gratis*. If anyone would like to make a voluntary donation, a Canadian tax receipt will be issued for all gifts of \$10 Canadian or more. (Please provide a postal address). Cheques should be made out to Carleton University, though you should clearly mark on your cheque that it is intended for FGRS, College of Humanities. Send to:

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