

THE SOCIETY IN 2005

Welcome to the second issue of Herculaneum Archaeology. Many readers will know that the Society was successfully launched at its inaugural meeting on 3 July 2004 at Wadham College, Oxford. At the time of writing, our second meeting on 15 January 2005 is imminent. Members have enjoyed spirited and riveting presentations from a variety of speakers, not only scholars but also historical novelists Robert Harris and Lindsey Davis; we have not shied away from controversy with a panel discussion on the future of Herculaneum featuring speakers for and against further excavation. Charitable registration is complete, the website is developing rapidly, international links are being forged. We had a prominent place at the annual conference of the American Philological Association in Boston in early January, where the DVD *Out of the Ashes*, produced by the Institute for the Study and Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts at Brigham Young University, won the APA's Outreach Award. The DVD is available free to all who join the Society and spectacularly documents the application of modern technology to the Herculaneum papyri.

The impressive archive of materials being assembled in Oxford — one of the Objects of the Society — is described on page 2. Other short-term possibilities for our charity are assisting with the work on the papyri in Naples, or helping students. We all await eagerly the outcome of the feasibility study on the Villa, and hope the difficulties can be resolved. In the meantime other work cries out to be done at Herculaneum and we have inquired about ways we might help.

Please keep checking the website for news, for instance about a planned event in Naples in June. I hope you will enjoy this second issue of the newsletter, and if you have not yet joined the Society, will consider doing so now.

Robert Fowler
University of Bristol



ARCHIVE OF THE HERCULANEUM SOCIETY

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

The objects of the Society are:

- to advance the **education** of the public concerning the World Heritage Site of Herculaneum, in particular to create an archive of materials relating to the World Heritage site at Herculaneum and the work of the Herculaneum Society
- to promote **research** into Herculaneum, including the continued investigation of the Villa of the Papyri at Herculaneum, and the publication of the useful results of such research
- to promote the **conservation**, for the benefit of the public, of the artefacts and buildings at Herculaneum

INDEX

page 2 - Archive of the Herculaneum Society

page 3 - Deconstructing Herculaneum

James Andrews

pages 4 & 5 - Brought to Light: new images from Herculaneum and Monte Soma

page 6 - News from the Herculaneum Papyri

Richard Janko

page 7 - Il Porcino - Our Mascot?

Dirk Obbink

back page - Review of *A catalog of identifiable figure painters of ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae* by L. Richardson, Jr.

Matthew Bladen

- Society and membership information

Left: View of Vesuvius from Santa Lucia harbour, Naples, with entry to Castel dell'Ovo (right).

ARCHIVE OF THE HERCULANEUM SOCIETY

* Contributions invited *

The Herculaneum Society is pleased to announce the launch of its official "Archive". One of the goals of the Society (formulated at its inception in its articles of association) is to act as a repository of materials documenting the recovery of and ongoing work on Herculaneum and the Villa of the Papyri and make these available to members of the Society and the interested public. The materials are housed in the Society's headquarters, and mounted selectively on the Society's website (<http://www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk/>) for internet access. Members and the interested public are encouraged to make use of the Archive for any purpose relevant to the aims of the Society, ranging from scholarly research to information on the Society's current activities, upcoming events, and forms of outreach.

As a registered charity, the Society welcomes and invites donations to its Archive of the following categories of materials relating to Herculaneum and its archaeological context: the Villa of the Papyri, its ancient library and papyri, the Bay of Naples region, and Campania in general:

- Books (new or used), pamphlets, papers, off-prints (including photocopies).
- Manuscripts, transcripts, reports, notes, diaries, letters.
- Plans, maps, drawings, posters.
- Photographs, videos, postcards, tourist memorabilia.
- Equipment and conservation materials.
- Contributions in cash or kind to the Archive's development.

Development of the Archive is already underway. The existing, initial core of the Society's Archive consists of digital images of the Oxford facsimiles of the Herculaneum papyri and of John Hayter's unpublished editions and papers (over 2,400 in all) created by the Bodleian Library.

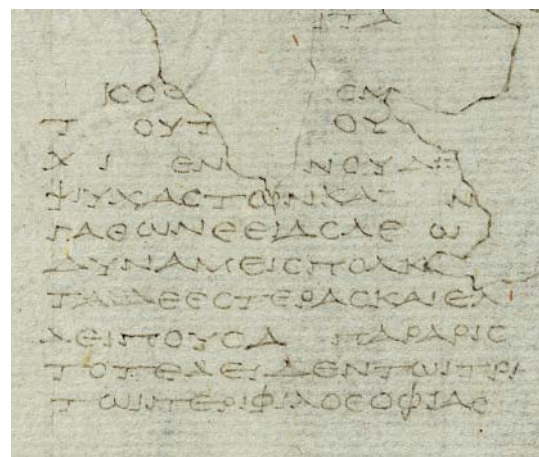
In addition, the Society's Archive maintains and regularly updates the following databases:
(i) an on-line bibliography of Herculaneum and the Villa of the Papyri;
(ii) a historical database of work on the ancient library and its papyrus books (including a topographical index of scholars' papers);
(iii) an on-line Guide to Published Editions and Trans-

lations of the Herculaneum Papyri;
(iv) a Gazetteer of Work in Progress on Herculaneum, the Villa, and the Herculaneum Papyri; and
(v) a List of Speakers willing to lecture on Herculaneum, the Villa of the Papyri and its ancient library, and the aims of the Society.

Materials are available for inspection or study over the internet (by request for materials not yet mounted) or in the Herculaneum Society's Study Room in the Classics Centre, Old Boys' School, George Street, Oxford on a walk-in basis or by appointment (44-(0)1865 288260).

For further information, or if you are interested in contributing materials or other resources (including information for the databases), please contact or send or bring them to: Matthew Bladen, The Herculaneum Society, Classics Centre, Old Boys' School, George Street, Oxford OX1 2RL, herculaneum@classics.ox.ac.uk (in the UK and Europe); in the US contact: Dan Leon, Department of Classical Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1003, dleon@umich.edu.

All donations are gratefully acknowledged. Valuations, loans, and collection or transportation of materials may be made by arrangement. Materials also may be placed on long- or short-term loan for curating, study, or imaging.



THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

Above: Oxford apograph of P.Herc 1428

DECONSTRUCTING HERCULANEUM

Not all is as it appears to be among the remains of Herculaneum and we must be wary of taking finds at face value, writes JAMES ANDREWS

The houses and streets of Herculaneum create an extraordinarily vivid impression of the Roman town. However, the idea that Herculaneum, like Pompeii, represents a perfect time capsule of Roman life is a largely misleading one. What can be seen today is the result of various and ongoing processes that need to be read carefully in order to understand the context of the site.

At Herculaneum, the AD 79 eruption of Vesuvius was a paradoxical event in that it not only uniquely preserved many of the things that make the site of such archaeological value, such as wooden furniture and other organic materials, but at the same time was enormously destructive. As well as undoubtedly killing everyone still in the town, the six pyroclastic flows and ground surges caused significant damage to many buildings by shattering and knocking down walls, in some places almost to ground level. Elsewhere, structural elements such as columns and other large objects such as statuary were violently torn away from their original position. Near the Suburban Baths, a marble statue of M. Nonius Balbus, one of the town's leading magistrates, was thrown fifteen metres from its base while the head was found several metres further from the body. Other, more unusual, things have been found in equally unusual places; the completely carbonised skeleton of one unfortunate victim was found two and a half metres above the ground level of the garden of the House of the Telephus Relief, evidently having been picked up by one of the surges from further up the mountain.

Although the underground 'excavations' of the 18th century by the Bourbons identified much of the town we know today, the manner of excavation, akin to a mining operation, was in many ways as destructive a process as the eruption itself. Almost every building now known at Herculaneum appears to have been reached by the network of tunnels that were about a metre in width and just over a metre and a half in height. The diggers progressed from room to room and house to house, usually at the ancient ground level, frequently punching their way straight through walls. Above all, the aim of the excavation was to recover fine art and artefacts, which resulted in the violent removal of any wall and floor decorations or objects that were deemed to be of value. This had a profound impact on what was found when the site was excavated to the open air in

the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whilst some rooms were found almost as they had been in AD 79, having avoided Bourbon exploration, many were found almost entirely devoid of ancient masonry, wall paintings and finds.



JAMES ANDREWS

Above: Atrium of the Casa del Sacello di Legno. The yellow patch on the left is a modern patching of a Bourbon tunnel which passed through the wall.

The damage that had been sustained to the buildings by both the eruption and the Bourbon tunnels forced the excavators to reconstruct many of the walls heavily as work proceeded. In a few places this happened to such an extent that a large proportion of the fabric visible today is in fact modern.

The processes that have created post-AD 79 Herculaneum are some of the most fascinating, although often confusing, aspects of the site. Herculaneum's destruction and burial, the early Bourbon exploration and its subsequent excavation and reconstruction have created a far more complex situation than appears on the surface.

BROUGHT

Published here for the first time, these photographs of the excavations at offer a glimpse of what still remains to be discovered of the

Right: The south end of ancient Herculaneum, facing east. Modern Ercolano is visible over the top of the excavated portion of the site. Less than one-quarter of the ancient city has been uncovered.



Left: Side elevation, facing north-east, showing lower, previously unknown level of Villa of the Papyri. Doorways and windows show access into interior rooms, only one of which (far left) has been excavated.

Right: East-facing view of the upper level of the Villa, previously known only via tunnels and fully excavated for the first time. Note how the wall has been curved back by the force of the volcanic flow.



TO LIGHT

the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum and the Augustan villa at Monte Soma buildings and artefacts caught up in the eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79



Left: Wall painting details from the upper storey of the Villa.

Right: Ceiling decoration from the interior of one excavated room in the newly-discovered lower storey of the Villa. The ivy motifs are Dionysiac and symposiastic, suggesting perhaps that this was a dining room or a place for entertaining guests. Note the Cupid figure in the centre.



Left: Southern elevation of the newly discovered villa of the Augustan family at Monte Soma on the north slope of Vesuvius. The entablature at the upper right of the photograph shows the gable of an *aedicula* (small temple).

More photographs from these excavations can be found on the Society's website, <http://www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk/>

NEWS FROM THE HERCULANEUM PAPYRI

RICHARD JANKO explores a world of scholarship that has been rediscovered through the finds at the Villa of the Papyri

Even as the world waits to see whether the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri will resume, and fresh archaeological discoveries are made at the Villa of Augustus, scholars continue to glean more from the ancient books found in 1752-4, by using new technologies like Multi-Spectral Digital Imaging; with these we can read more of them than ever before.

Vergil's teacher Philodemus (c. 110-35 BC), whose books these probably were, was not only a distinguished poet and philosopher but also a critic concerned to determine what makes a poem good. He wrote a work in five fat scrolls entitled *On Poems*. I was first led to study these scrolls twenty years ago, after I had brought out a book about Aristotle's lost writings on comedy. I chanced upon a reference to a work of Philodemus in which he rebutted Aristotle's poetic theory. This turned out to be Book IV of *On Poems*. Philodemus not only rejects Aristotle's theory of tragedy, raising objections that have been formulated independently by modern scholars, but he also gives us vital clues as to what Aristotle meant by catharsis. Newly read passages talk about lyric verse, the painters Apelles and Pauson, and the writers Stesichorus, Hesiod, and Sophron.

In Books I-III of *On Poems* Philodemus attacks a school of euphonist critics, who held, with varying degrees of extremism, that only the sound of a verse matters; the sense is irrelevant. This work fills in the gap in the history of literary criticism between Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Art of Poetry*, showing us that the critics of the intervening centuries treated poetry as more like music in its effect, in this resembling certain moderns like Mallarmé. Having published the first complete text of Book I, I am working to bring out texts of Books III and IV.

The Herculaneum papyri constantly yield serendipitous surprises. Recently my colleagues Knut Kleve and Gianluca Del Mastro deciphered the end of a book-roll, which contained the title of a previously unknown work: 'Zeno, Against the Treatise of Craterus "Against the "On Geometrical Proofs <of Zeno>"'. In other words, this was a response by Philodemus' teacher Zeno of Sidon (c. 150-75 B.C.), who also taught Cicero, to a hostile book-review by Craterus. As often, the scribe tells us how long the text was, namely 2,050 units (some 4,100 lines); this

shows that Zeno, who was notorious for polemics, wrote a pretty lengthy reply! This is the first copy of Zeno's writings to come to light; they had all been lost in later antiquity.

Last summer I came across something equally unusual. Ancient scribes copied the titles at the start of book-rolls as well as at the end. The beginnings hardly ever survive, but a fragment from the outside of a roll caught my eye because it was written in big letters, 5.5 mm. high; titles are usually written in letters of this kind. Hence I could not resist trying to read it, and I think it says: 'Demetrius of Laconia [or Zeno of Sidon], On Vocabulary and On Words'. Other fragments of the same roll are certainly on this topic, and we already knew that Demetrius (active c. 100 BC) wrote on poetry and rhetoric. Beneath the title the copyist recorded the length of the text, probably 2,059 units. This seems to be the first papyrus ever found that preserves such information in its initial title.

On my first visit to Naples, I was amazed at how much was still to be discovered. Great progress has been made, but we still need to find a way to read without damaging them the hundreds of scrolls that were never opened; medical imaging may well offer possible solutions. And we must not turn our backs on the prospects of finding more books in the Villa; in a world increasingly ruled by ignorance, we need all the sources of wisdom that we can get.

Richard Janko
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
rjanko@umich.edu



Above: Interior of the Villa of the Papyri. Volcanic rubble encasing the walls is visible in the top right-hand corner.

IL PORCINO - OUR MASCOT?

DIRK OBBINK delves into the symbolism of the bronze pig recovered from Herculaneum

He comes poised with romping exuberance for rooting around with his nose in the ground. Visitors to the upper floors of the Museo Nazionale in Naples who, after a breathtaking look at Nestor's Cup in the Pithecusae exhibit, were lucky enough to find the Herculaneum Room unbarred, will remember seeing his blackened bronze form. He was recovered from the Villa of the Papyri (inv. 4893) along with a row of foot-racers, whose white eyes are still magnetized by the goal, and a chorus of similarly blackened dancing maidens. Together these figures are foregrounded in Carol Mattusch's new book *The Villa dei Papyri at Herculaneum: Life and Afterlife of a Sculpture Collection* (J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu 2005), which will be reviewed in the next issue of *Herculaneum Archaeology* (issue 3, summer 2005).

For many moderns the frisky porker symbolizes the vigorously hedonistic milieu of the Bay of Naples in the first centuries BC and AD, a backdrop that clearly informs the intellectual, literary, and sculptural programme of the Villa of the Papyri. But what kind of message would the savvy swine have sent out for the wealthy owner of the super-villa? The "City of Pigs" in Plato's *Republic* may come to mind but has no doubt different connotations. Readers of Lindsey Davis' *Silver Pigs* (1989), her first novel and the first outing for the Roman Sherlock Falco and his accomplice Helena, will know that those "pigs" turn out to be a very different sort (they are silver ingots!).

More than one art historian has argued that our Porcino was placed near a statue of Epicurus which dominated the entrance to the peristyle of the Villa of the Papyri. Alongside the array of books written by Philodemus and found in the Villa it would be another sliver of evidence that L. Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, whose Epicurean predilections were well-known, was in fact the owner of the Villa of the Papyri. Horace, *Epistles* 1.4.16 speaks of *Epicuri de grege porcum*. Cicero impugning Piso says he graduated not from a school but from a "sty" (*hara*). But others have poured skepticism on the idea: just like children, the young of many animals, piglets among them, were popularly deployed images in the repertoire of Hellenistic artists. We may compare them to the cast piglets used as popular symbols of good-luck and fertility in 19th century Victorian culture.



The many examples of sculpted animals in Herculaneum and Pompeii alone are evidence for this fashion and may well tempt us to question the porcine philosophical credentials, especially since Lucretius himself distances the biology and behaviour of humans from that of pigs (*De rerum natura* 6.973-8).

So should we draw back from the view that our Porcino might have formed part of an Epicurean sculptural program? Hope comes from a small pig at the feet of Epicurus on one of the famous cups from Boscoreale, which may be read as a 'logo' of his philosophy for guests without letters or with an insufficient command of Greek to make out the inscription on the cup.

Friends of the Society with good ideas on the subject are invited to send them to Matthew Bladen at herculaneum@classics.ox.ac.uk so that we can prominently display them in the next issue of *Herculaneum Archaeology*. And may we extend the invitation to members who have 'silver pigs' of their own to contribute and to be put to good use?

Dirk Obbink

DIFFERENT STROKES

Review of *A Catalog of Identifiable Figure Painters of Ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae* by L. Richardson Jr. (Johns Hopkins UP, 2000)

The earthquake which hit the environs of Vesuvius in AD 62 caused so much damage that both public and private buildings were still being repaired seventeen years later when the volcano's eruption put a final end to the towns of the region. In many houses redecoration was incomplete, and even the finest buildings needed further work. This book attempts to identify individual figure artists who worked on houses in Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabiae by their artwork, and thereby enable questions to be answered about both decorative practices - which artists worked together, who worked on what, who were the 'big name artists' - and how the reconstruction period between 62 and 79 was approached.

The method by which artists are identified was devised by Morelli in the nineteenth century, and involves close inspection of repeated details, particularly those most likely to be produced in a standard but individual way, such as feet. The artists are then

divided into chronologically successive 'styles' according to Mau's classification, although the distinguishing features of each style are unfortunately not laid out for the reader. The introduction also summarises the results of Richardson's study and usefully sets out both the issues at hand and the conclusions that he draws from the catalogue itself, which makes up the bulk of the book.

Richardson admits that his work is selective, concentrating on artwork that is sufficiently well preserved to allow the detailed inspection that is essential to his methods of identification. It is also not a book to be used in isolation: there are no illustrations, but discussion of each artist is followed by a large number of references to image reproductions. Finally, the methods employed are of course to some extent subjective, as Richardson acknowledges, but this is inevitable in a work dealing with the interpretation of art. What is most important is that Richardson follows his methodology consistently and asks thought-provoking questions of the material.

Matthew Bladen

SUBSCRIPTION LEVELS

All members will receive a copy of the DVD *Out of the Ashes* while stocks last.

Student / Concessions: £15 / \$30 / €26

Membership includes two copies per year of the Society newsletter, and invitation to the AGM and Christmas event

Benefactor Membership: £250 / \$500 / €440

Membership includes two copies per year of the Society newsletter; invitation to the AGM and Christmas event and priority invitation to special events; receipt of *Cronache Ercolanesi*, the journal of CISPE, or an appropriate alternative; and publication of name in Society newsletter (if desired).

Standard Membership: £50 / \$100 / €88

Membership includes two copies per year of the Society newsletter, and invitation to the AGM and Christmas event

Patron Membership: £1000 / \$2000 / €1700

Membership includes two copies per year of the Society newsletter; invitation to the AGM and Christmas event and priority invitation to special events; receipt of *Cronache Ercolanesi*, the journal of CISPE, or an appropriate alternative; and publication of name in Society newsletter (if desired). Patrons will also have exclusive access to gatherings with specialists at Herculaneum and related sites, and to other patron events.

The Friends of Herculaneum Society
The Classics Centre
The Old Boys' School
George Street
Oxford OX1 2RL
United Kingdom

Tel: (+44) (0) 1865 288260

Fax: (+44) (0) 1865 288386

Email: herculaneum@classics.ox.ac.uk

Website: <http://www.herculaneum.ox.ac.uk/>

For more information about the Society, or if you have any comments, suggestions or ideas for articles for the next edition of *Herculaneum Archaeology*, please feel free to contact the editor via any of the contact details on the left. We hope you have enjoyed this edition, and thank you for your interest.

Edited by Matthew Bladen