

A TIME TO GROW

It can safely be said that 2006 was a good year for the Society. The highlight was undoubtedly the conference held in Naples during the summer, which was universally deemed a rousing success, and we hope it will be the first of many. The experience of exploring the lost town, descending the 18th-century passages and marvelling at the subterranean wealth paradoxically preserved by a terrible natural disaster is one that all friends of Herculaneum will wish to enjoy. Those who did not attend last year will hopefully have had their appetite whetted by the photographs in the previous issue, and can find a report of the event within these pages.

The Society also passed another significant milestone: its second anniversary. After the enormous media coverage that we received at the beginning of 2005, the upsurge of interest was extremely welcome, but it also increased the burden of expectation. For a young organization, failing to develop is tantamount to falling back, and it would have been easy for the Society to be lulled into resting on its laurels. But we have continued to grow, to gather for meetings that are as convivial as they are educational, and to attract the attention of benefactors keen to support our laudable and necessary goals. The Society is particularly grateful to the Institute for the Study of Antiquity and Christian Origins (ISAC) at the University of Texas at Austin and to the Agricultural Bank of Greece (ATEbank) for their immensely generous benefactions.

Another of our benefactors is TMI, the Episcopal School of Texas in San Antonio. Last summer Dr. Jeffrey Fish, professor of Classics at Baylor University and a stalwart Friend of Herculaneum, gave a talk on Herculaneum, the Society and its aims to the Southwest Texas Archaeological Society. Present at the lecture were Classics students from TMI who had heard him talk about the Society previously. To his great surprise and pleasure, the students from TMI presented him with a cheque for \$753 for the Society (the number was meant to echo the date of the founding of Rome), all of which they had raised on their own initiative. We are extremely grateful for the energy and effort that TMI put into this unexpected and most welcome donation.

In order to grow, the Society needs the help of well-wishers of all kinds. We already count all of you as Friends, for your kind donations to the Society's efforts, and for the additional contributions, not only financial, that many of you have made. But if any of you feel that you can offer additional help in the way of time, expertise and knowledge, please do get in touch with us. Over the coming months we would like the Society to grow still further, to continue drawing attention to the needs of the site at Herculaneum, and encouraging and supporting the work of scholars of all kinds who work on the materials found there. We hope that our members will be inspired by the example of TMI, and will join us in our efforts. As those of you who have visited Herculaneum will know, and those who have not (yet) been will see from the report, our work remains both needed and eminently worthwhile.



Left: Members listen to a guided tour at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale; Karl Weber's plan of the Villa of the Papyri is in the background.

BENJAMIN WEAVER

THE FIRST NAPLES CONFERENCE

From 28 June to 2 July 2006 some 50 Friends gathered in Naples for the Society's first congress in Italy. The large attendance reflected members' keen anticipation that this would be a special event, as indeed it proved to be.

Wednesday the 28th saw a small number of early arrivals meet and greet in the bar of the Grand Hotel Oriente. Overlooking the fact that the hotel had seen fit to close the bar that evening, it was a congenial and leisurely beginning, encouraging us to lay on a better-fuelled reception the following evening for the larger numbers arriving on Thursday. That day was unstructured, and many guests took advantage of the time to explore the city, buy their tourist passes, and take in some of the sights not scheduled for visits during the rest of the conference. It was a brutal, drooping hot day, and Friends looked more than a little wilted upon returning to the Oriente. Energy levels were clearly restored overnight, however, as the Society set out Friday morning for the visit to Herculaneum, the highlight of the conference.

There had been some anxiety the day before, as in spite of months of preparation, letters from the Superintendent himself, and plentiful e-mails, a last-minute phone call to confirm arrangements revealed that the office staff on site had no idea we were coming. This was put right, though when we arrived the next morning, they had neglected to tell the staff at the entrance, who also had no idea we were coming, and needed persuading before we were all admitted. (Incidentally, advance booking by individuals on the internet of visits to the Villa seems, by contrast, to work perfectly.) This final hurdle cleared, we proceeded to the site, where the staff of the Herculaneum Conservation Project were in fact ready to receive us, and gave us an excellent tour.

We then split up, one group going to the underground theatre (where warnings about the extreme hazards of the descent proved to be somewhat exaggerated), the other to the Villa of the Papyri where we had ample time to explore this wonderful excavation, and wonder about what remains there to be discovered.

The day was not as hot as Thursday, but the heart of it was best avoided nonetheless. Members had a chance to freshen up in the afternoon before proceeding to the early evening reception at the Biblioteca Nazionale. Here we were formally received by the Director, Mauro Giancaspro, and a representative of the mayor of Ercolano, his worship having been detained by a crisis to do with ungathered rubbish and the associated strike. Professor Thomas Noble Howe gave an outstanding illustrated lecture on 'Seeking a new collaborative model for international site management: The Restoring Ancient Stabiae Foundation Master Plan', which contained many ideas applicable to Herculaneum and its potential development. In spite of the vast open windows, the atmosphere in the Sala Rari was close, to say the least, but it was a fabulous setting for the meeting. While enjoying refreshments after the talks, Friends had a chance to explore some of the library's treasures, and in particular to see some of the Herculaneum papyri. During this day and the day before, senior scholars and graduate students interested in the papyrus texts had been participating in study sessions in the Officina dei Papiri, courtesy of the Direttrice Agnese Travaglione.

Right: View of the ongoing excavations at Somma Vesuviana.

BENJAMIN WEAVER



ENCE, 28 JUNE – 2 JULY 2006

Right:
Winckelmann's
inspiration:
Peplophoroi
(robed women),
NM 5605, NM
5604, NM 5619,
from the Villa of
the Papyri, now
at the Museo
Archeologico
Nazionale,
Naples.

BENJAMIN WEAVER



That evening the Italian football team won the quarter-final in the World Cup, resulting in pandemonium in the streets which did not abate until well on in the night. To venture forth from the hotel really did seem like taking one's life in one's hands; fatalities are not unknown in Naples on such occasions. I thought at the time that, if this is what the quarter-final is like, heaven help us if they win the whole thing. Which they did. A friend told me later that, among other things they did that night, the Neapolitans wrenched a foghorn from a ship in the harbour – the sort audible at twenty miles – set it up in the piazza outside the Palazzo Reale, and leaned on it all night.

Saturday morning we met at the Accademia di Archeologia, Lettere e Belle Arti in Napoli, another lovely setting, and enjoyed three excellent lectures, first from Francesca Longo Auricchio on the modern history of work on the Herculaneum Papyri at Naples, then from Antonio De Simone on his excavation of the Villa of the Papyri, and finally from Carlo Knight on some of the figures prominent in the excavation of Herculaneum and early work on the papyri, and on the question of where the western limit of Herculaneum is to be located. (Papers from all three speakers are now available on the Society's website.) The President of the Academy, Prof. Antonio Nazzaro, welcomed the Society, and gifts were exchanged.

In her talk on the International Centre for the Study of the Herculaneum Papyri (CISPE, in Italian), Professor Longo Auricchio paid particular tribute to its founder Marcello Gigante, professor of Greek at the University of Naples, who revitalised the study of the papyri, and whose initiative led to the excavation of the Villa. We were honoured to have Signora Gigante in attendance on this occasion. In the afternoon Friends enjoyed a bespoke tour of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, gaining admittance to a room full of Pompeian frescoes not opened for four years. Richard Janko did sterling service simultaneously translating the commentary of our Italian guide.

On Sunday Friends had a choice, to go either south to Pompeii or north to Cuma. The Vesuvian venture was not without its share of mishap, as the restaurant reconnoitred and recommended by two of the trustees had in the interim moved a few miles offsite – a piece of intelligence not discovered before the group had dispersed to the four corners of the site, making it difficult to communicate changes in plans. In the end, with the usual scrambling, all came right, as it always does (the lunch was excellent). The site was relatively uncrowded, and members had a good if somewhat shorter than optimum visit, as we wished to take in Somma Vesuviana as well.

(Continued on page 4)

Right: The basilica at Pompeii, looking towards its south-western end.

BENJAMIN WEAVER



Here, Antonio De Simone and his son Ferdinando showed us around their exciting new excavation of “Augustus’ Villa” (identification at this stage uncertain): a splendid site, and a tremendous privilege for the Friends to have this exclusive tour from the archaeologists. Time prevented us from completing the ascent to the summit; but then we must reserve something for the next visit. Northbound colleagues had a fruitful day visiting Cuma, the Campi Flegrei, and Baia, although the glass-bottom boat trip did not quite live up to expectations: murky waters rather cancelled the advantage of transparency. Otherwise all went well; the museum was a treat, David Armstrong kindly stepping in to do the simultaneous translation.

Non vediamo l’ora, we can hardly wait until the next visit. It does take a lot of work, and I want to thank those in Oxford who assisted, Ben Weaver, Ben Henry, and Matthew Bladen, and particularly Alison Carter, a Friend who put her valuable skills as a travel agent with long experience in Naples at the service of the Society, and did most of the negotiating and arranging of the accommodation, tours, catering and so on. We owe the great part of the trip’s success to her. The hope is to organise another congress in 2008. In the meantime, the Oriente has offered Friends the same rate for 2007 as we had last summer (single occupancy €105 per night, double €125). Mention your membership when booking.

Robert Fowler

Right: Cast of a victim of the eruption of Vesuvius, in a storeroom at Pompeii.



BENJAMIN WEAVER

RE-EXAMINING THE CASA DEL MOSAICO DI NETTUNO E ANFITRITE AT HERCULANEUM

Despite their immense value for scholars, the vast majority of the houses excavated at Herculaneum have not yet received the detailed treatment they deserve. In this article, JAMES ANDREWS turns his attention to one such house.

The Casa del mosaico di Nettuno e Anftrite (V.6–7), although relatively modest in size, is undoubtedly one of Herculaneum's showpiece houses owing to the famous wall mosaic in the outdoor *triclinium* (8) at the back of the house. Both this and – perhaps more so – the well-preserved carbonised mezzanine level and amphora-rack in the *taberna* attached to the house have frequently made it the subject (although usually only briefly) of reference in studies of Roman housing, architecture and art. Yet despite Maiuri's account of the house in his 1958 volume, a detailed structural history of the house, and therefore also the context in which its most characteristic features should be considered, is much needed. Similarly, as is the case with almost all of Herculaneum's houses, its finds and decorations remain unpublished. The present article is the product of detailed research conducted between 2002 and 2007, which aims not only to understand the structural history of the house better but also to provide wider insights into housing patterns and urban development at Herculaneum.

The house was excavated and restored between November 1932 and May 1934 under the auspices of Amedeo Maiuri. Exceptionally, the excavation of the house was admirably

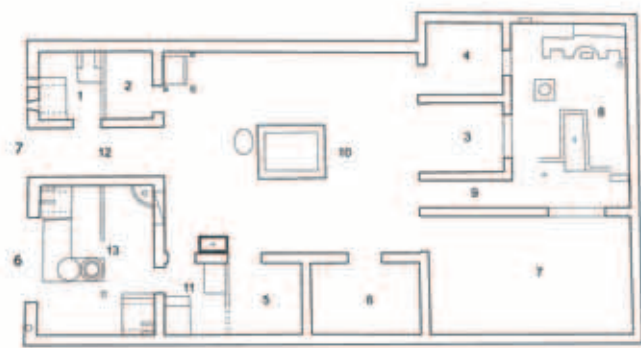
documented in the excavation diaries (*Giornale degli Scavi*), with detailed daily entries and descriptions of rooms enabling us to provenance accurately many of the finds (including those in the upper floor) and also to determine some features which are no longer visible. The excavation diary records that various parts of the house were heavily disturbed during the Bourbon period with *cunicoli* (tunnels) throughout the house, including in the upper floor. This explains the lack of surviving decoration in several rooms, most noticeably in the *atrium*, the uneven spread of finds made during the excavations of Maiuri, and the absence of at least one feature related to the piped water system.

The extent of Bourbon disturbance, combined with structural damage sustained during the eruption itself, forced Maiuri's workers to straighten or demolish the deteriorated fabric as they progressed stratigraphically from the surface. This enabled the almost complete restoration of the upper floors of this house (including many ancient elements such as the original carbonised beams), although the high levels of restoration frequently render the process of understanding structural relationships and building phases immensely difficult.

(continued on page 6)



Above: Outdoor *triclinium* (8), showing water tank / *nymphaeum* (left) and wall mosaic of Neptune and Amphitrite (right).



Above: Plan of the ground floor.

Below: Plan of the upper floors.



The ground floor of the house follows a traditional arrangement, with the *fauces* on axis with the *atrium* (with side rooms on the south side) and *tablinum*, providing a view from the entrance through to the famous wall mosaic on the east wall of the court (8) at the rear. This court also contained a large water tank / *nymphaeum*, while evidence for lead pipes in the pavement indicates the presence of other water features. Most of the principal rooms (3–4, 6–8 and the *atrium*) were decorated in fine paintings of the Fourth Style, which were accompanied by mosaic floors in rooms 3–4 and 7 (a *triclinium*, in which was found part of a wooden couch). Finally, the south-west room had been converted into a *taberna*, which was equipped with two masonry hearths, a wooden shelving rack (probably for amphorae) and a low mezzanine level that was probably used for sleeping space rather than for storage.

The house had two separate upper floors, providing just over 1/3 of the total living space: one above the rooms to the west and south of the *atrium* and another above three rooms to the east of the *atrium*. The floor above the rooms to the east of the *atrium* was probably reached by a wooden ladder in the open courtyard (8) and is not

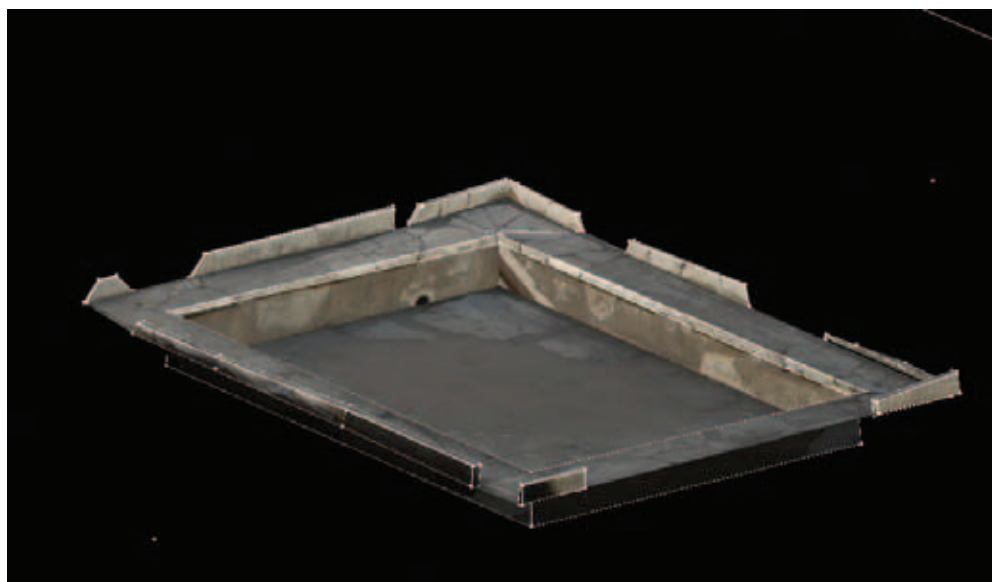
very well preserved, consisting of two simply decorated rooms. The upper floor above the rooms to the west and south of the *atrium* (reached by a stair in room 11) is however excellently preserved and consisted of eight rooms, and a balcony which provided access to the various rooms, divided from one another by light *opus craticium* partitions. Three of these rooms were finely decorated in wall paintings of the Fourth Style. One of them, room 16, to judge from its decorations and dimensions, was probably a dining room. The remaining rooms included a kitchen (18) in which was a *lararium* and a latrine (20), providing compelling evidence for a dynamic range of activity.



Above: View of the façade, showing the upper floor and balcony.

The house, as it appears today, was built *ex novo* at some point in the early to mid-first century AD, entirely replacing an earlier building only small traces of which (in *opus incertum*) can now be distinguished in the south party wall; evidently this earlier structure had been demolished prior to the new build. The construction of the new house was carried out entirely in *opus reticulatum*, the use of which was ubiquitous at Herculaneum during this period. The arrangement of the ground floor rooms was not dissimilar to that which can be seen today, although the *taberna* and masonry *triclinium* and water tank / *nymphaeum* in courtyard 8 were later developments.

Right: Digital model of the *impluvium* using photogrammetric survey (model by P. Rose / J. Andrews).



Right: Upper floor room 16, decorated in Fourth Style paintings (taken from the *taberna*).



The new build included the upper floors, which formed an architecturally integrated part of the new house, in contrast to the *ad hoc* conversions which had traditionally been the norm (particularly at Pompeii). Indeed, the *ex novo* construction of houses in which upper floors formed an ever-increasing proportion of domestic space is one of the principal characteristics in Herculaneum's development during this period.

The next significant stage in the history of the house follows in the aftermath of the famous earthquake of AD 62. Evidence for a major collapse, presumably provoked by the earthquake, can be seen in the north wall of the *atrium*. The subsequent repair work appears to have included the re-decoration of most of the house in its Fourth Style wall paintings and the installation of the masonry *triclinium* in courtyard 8. Following on from this phase of repair and redecoration, a final series of modifications and embellishments included the conversion of room 13 into a *taberna*, the installation of lead pipes providing pressurised water to several features throughout the house, as well as the construction of the water tank / *nymphaeum* and creation of the famous wall mosaic in courtyard 8.

The brief synthesis presented here has outlined the development of one of Herculaneum's best known houses. This should be seen in the context of the wider picture of development in the first half of the first century AD which is chiefly characterised by the wholesale renovation of the urban fabric. Many of the houses built at this time adopted new and unusual designs and layouts, while others retained the traditional model. Yet all of these newly built or rebuilt residences share a common characteristic in that they were purpose-built usually with extensive upper floors, which formed an increasing proportion of household space. This not only reflects architectural solutions to the problem of housing an increasing population, but also points towards shifts in living practices and activity within the house itself. A full paper on the development and function of the house is currently being prepared for publication.

James Andrews
Archaeology Department, University of Reading
jamesandrews@dial.pipex.com

SOCIETY NEWS

In the News at Pompeii and Ercolano

A new International Centre for the Study of Herculaneum will soon be open for business in Ercolano. The Centre is an initiative of the newly created Associazione Herculaneum, which is made up of the Comune di Ercolano, the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei, and the British School at Rome. Its purposes are to promote study and conservation of the site, to provide training for students and archaeologists, and to develop the site over time with a view to improving the experience for visitors and encouraging longer stays in the town. The Centre thus has aims similar to those of the Friends. Its establishment was reported at the Annual General Meeting in July 2006, where the strong wish was expressed, and a motion passed, to offer our collaboration, including a £1,000 bursary for a student to go to Ercolano and work at the Centre. This offer has been received with gratitude, and the bursary will be advertised as soon as the Centre is ready to begin operations, which we expect will be soon; once the final technicalities are sorted out, a manager and assistant will be hired and the already planned programme of activities put into effect. The Centre will eventually be situated in the Villa Maiuri in Ercolano, currently being renovated.

Planning anything with the Soprintendenza is unusually difficult these days, in that the Superintendent, Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, in office since 1995, recently felt obliged to tender his resignation over a disagreement with the ministry. There followed an international uproar, with many people writing to the minister in support of Prof. Guzzo, who has now withdrawn his resignation pending further discussions. The future is still unclear, however. The upheaval has, it would seem, affected the publication of the Feasibility Study on the excavation of the Villa of the Papyri, which the Superintendent said not long ago would be published shortly after Christmas. Its various sections were sent to experts for consultation and improvement in technical matters during the past spring and summer. We hope that the study may soon be published, so that a serious debate can begin on the options for further exploration.

A Change of Scene

After more than two years' residence at the Old Boys' School, George Street, the Society has returned to its original location on St. Giles, where the Ioannou Centre for Classical and Byzantine Studies has just opened. Established in memory of the late Cypriot businessman and philanthropist Stelios Ioannou, the Centre, along with the Sackler Library and the Ashmolean Museum, forms a hub for research and scholarship in the classics at Oxford.

Please note the change of address, and do come to visit if you happen to be in Oxford.

CONTENTS

pp. 2–4: The First Naples Conference,
28 June – 2 July 2006

Robert Fowler

pp. 5–7: Re-examining the Casa del
mosaico di Nettuno e Anftrite at
Herculaneum

James Andrews

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

The Friends of Herculaneum Society
The Ioannou Centre for Classical and
Byzantine Studies, 66 St. Giles
Oxford OX1 3LU
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. We hope you have enjoyed this edition, and thank you for your interest.

Edited by Matthew Bladen