

SEPTEMBER SELF-STUDY PROGRAMME

ROMAN TIMES AND ARCHAEOLOGY

We hope that Guy de la Bedoyère will be able to give his lecture, '*Villas in Roman Britain The Architecture and Art of a remote Roman province*', originally scheduled for September 2020, in September 2021.

In the meantime, you are invited to view the second of his talks on YouTube '**Real Lives of Roman Britain**': https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TrDRpi_q-Y&t=37s

'The transmissible sense of self' - Guy researches the various lives of ordinary citizens. Tibernius Celerianus, a shipper - the first evidence we have of some-one describing himself as a Londoner.

Gaius Severius Emeritus, a centurion - but with the thankless task of repairing vandalism at Aquae Sulis (the Roman baths at what is now Bath).

Claudia Severa, writing (chiefly through a scribe) to Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of the commanding officer at Vindolanda, on Hadrian's Wall - inviting her to her birthday party.

The Pulborough Potter, in Aldgate, trying (unsuccessfully) to compete with the lucrative trade in Samian Ware (high quality tableware) from Southern France - and many more.

Should you be interested to seek out the Roman artefacts in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, it will now be open three days a week - Thursday to Saturday. Admission is free, but you will need a pre-booked, timed ticket to enter. Go to the Museum's Home Page (<https://maa.cam.ac.uk>) and click Book Here. Note: This has closed due to the Covid 10 lockdown until further notice.

Samian Ware pottery came mainly from the southern, central and eastern areas of Gaul (France), though Romano-British production centred on places such as Colchester. Samian is fine, hard, red-gloss ware. Some pieces are plain, some decorated. Plain is wheel-thrown, then dipped by hand into slip before being fired. Decorated is made from a mould. We can tell who made the pottery by looking for the maker's stamps - usually pressed into the article before it was fired. Decorated vessels may have two makers' marks - the potter's or his employer, and the mould maker. They may also have a hand-written signature.

The Museum at Vindolanda has an almost complete dinner service of Samian Ware - but it was broken in transit, and thrown, unused, into the fort ditch. - For further information, see <https://www.vindolanda.com/Blog/a-closer-look-at-samian-pottery>

Cambridge's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology holds a large collection of Samian Ware, including pieces from excavations at Great Chesterford and Litlington. The Samian Ware display case is situated in the Local Archaeology gallery, on the ground floor.

Further reading: 'Roman Britain. and Where to Find It', by Denise Allen and Mike Bryan, Amberley Publishing, £19.99.

The Romans ruled Britannia for more than 350 years, leaving an indelible mark on our landscape. Town and countryside were transformed by innovations in comfort and culture -

albeit shot through with a uniquely British twist - glimpses of which can still be seen at numerous splendid sites and museums in England, Wales, and Scotland. 'Roman Britain and Where to Find It' provides the history of the best Roman villas, forts, walls, and bathhouses, as well as the hidden gems which the uninitiated might pass by. It also explains how these remnants of the past fit into the bigger story, pointing out details which have their own tale to tell, connecting us with the people who lived here 2,000 years ago.