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**ISSUED 5 SEPTEMBER 2016**

## Conference will review 'What the Romans built for us' in Kent



1. Revealing the foundations of the Roman villa at Minster, Thanet, during a Kent Archaeological Society excavation.



2. One of the heated rooms revealed at Minster Roman villa.

The importance of Roman villas in the landscape and history of Kent will be the theme of a one-day conference, sponsored by the Kent Archaeological Society in association with the Department of Classical and Archaeological Studies, University of Kent, to be held at Rutherford College, University of Kent at Canterbury, on Saturday 26 November 2016.

**Dr Elizabeth Blanning** will set the scene by examining the general assumption that “the Romans” arrived in AD 43, displaced the local population and, in AD 410, equally suddenly left, leaving the natives to resume their uncivilized ways!

Elizabeth is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Kent and is particularly interested in daily life in the Roman provinces.

**Kevin Fromings**, who cut his archaeological teeth at Fishbourne Roman palace, will describe what is known about the villas along 34 kilometers (21 miles) of the River Darent at Otford, Shoreham, Lullingstone, Farningham, Horton Kirby, South Darenth and Dartford, and discuss what has yet to be discovered about them.

Kevin is Chairman of the West Kent Archaeological Society and founded the ‘Discover Roman Otford Project’ earlier this year.

**Simon Elliott** will outline his research into the vast quarries in the Medway valley that produced ragstone for the ‘built environment’ of south-east England, including Roman London. This was ‘an enormous industrial enterprise, featuring a fully integrated transport infrastructure utilizing the River Medway and Thames Estuary’, with villa settlements where the managers of the quarries lived.

Simon is currently completing a PhD in Archaeology at the University of Kent.

**Dr Patricia Reid** will put forward various theories for the remarkably regular spacing of a series of modest villas to the north and south of Watling Street between The Blean forest near Canterbury and Durobrivae, Cambridgeshire.

Pat is the Director of the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group.

**Edward Biddulph** will describe how the north Kent coast became a centre of Roman pottery and salt production, and how recent fieldwork at the site of Ebbsfleet International railway station established that malting and brewing were also industrial activities in this area.

Edward, a Roman pottery specialist, is a senior project manager with Oxford Archaeology.

**Dr Lacey Wallace** will present case-studies from Cambridge University's Canterbury Hinterland Project, which is investigating Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and Saxon sites in order to understand the relationships between Canterbury and its local landscape, and connections with the Continent and the rest of Britain.

Lacey is the project's Principal Investigator and is currently a lecturer in Roman History and Material Culture at the University of Lincoln.

**Keith Parfitt** will explore why most of the Roman villas in eastern Kent were built either at the foot of the chalk downs, close to the shore of the former Wantsum Channel, as at Abbey Farm, Minster, Thanet, or in the vale below the scarp slope, as at Folkestone.

Keith, a member of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, has worked on many major archaeology projects and at present is directing major excavations in Dover town centre.

Tickets for 'Villas in the Roman landscaper' cost £25 each. Download an application form from [www.kentarchaeology.org.uk](http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk) (KAS NEWS & EVENTS page)