

# ROMAN·ROADS·RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

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## NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2016

MILLE·VIAE·DUCUNT·HOMINES·PER·SECU·LA·ROMAM



"Saturnalia", by Antoine Callet (1741 - 1823)

Whether you are celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, the winter solstice, feasting for Saturnalia, celebrating winter solstice or just spending time with friends, family or your community, may we wish you all

*a Very Merry  
Christmas and a  
Happy New Year*

This Christmas 2016 edition is the third in our Newsletter series, keeping all our members in touch with recent events, research, excavation, etc. organised by ourselves and by other groups. We are happy to consider any article or paper for possible inclusion - please contact the Editor.

### *In Brief.....*

#### **Ivan D Margary Memorial conference - Burn Hall Hotel, Huby, York 2**

Mike Haken reports back on the success of our first ever conference, and almost certainly the first ever conference in Britain to focus entirely on Roman roads, held in York in early November.

#### **RRRA Online Forum 4**

One of the ideas that came out of the Discussion groups at both conferences was that of an online forum, enabling members to communicate easily with those with common interests. Find out how this is already progressing.

#### **A Friend Remembered 5**

Most members will already be aware that our Treasurer, Hugh Toller, passed away on the 4th October. It is fair to say that Hugh did more for Roman roads research than anyone since Ivan Margary, yet hardly anyone is aware of it. We look back at the man and his legacy.

### *Roman Roads Research Review*

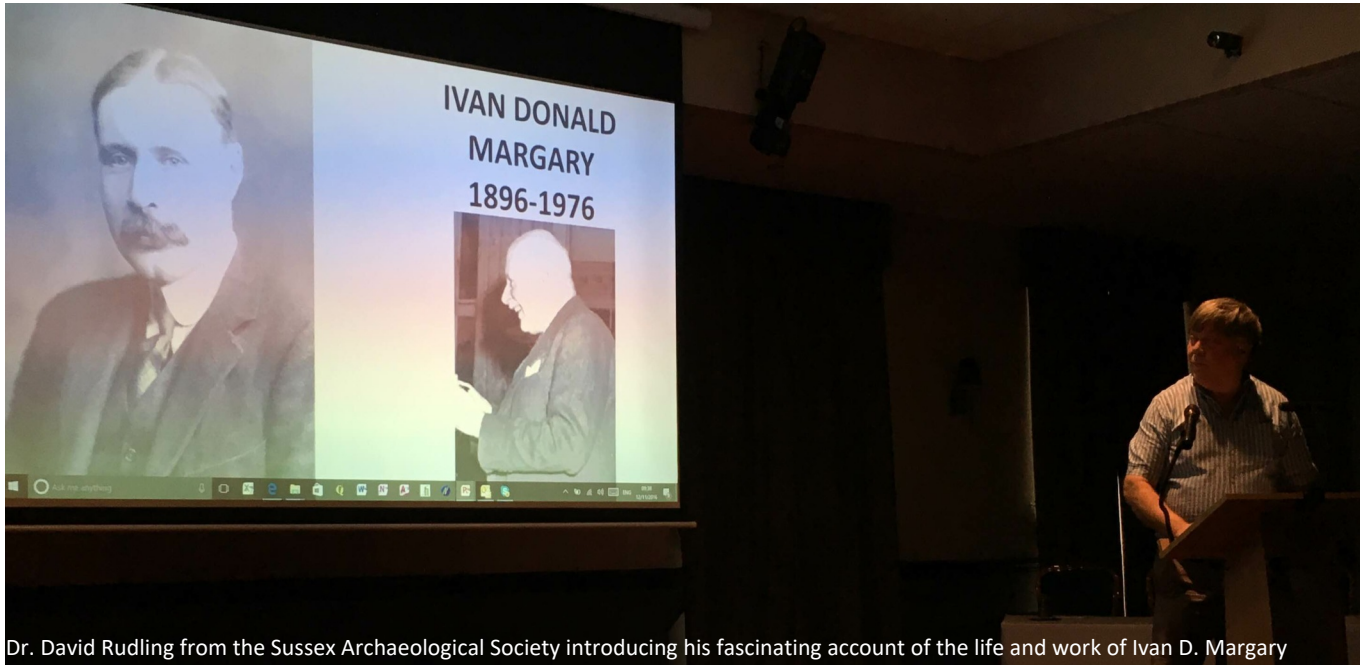
#### **Margary 7e uncovered near Penrith 7**

Mark Richards let us know about an excavation of Margary 7e near Penrith prior to a housing development.

If you know of any recent work related to Roman roads that you think our members should be made aware of, please let us know

## *The Ivan D Margary Memorial Conference* *Burn Hall Hotel, Huby, York. 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016*

*Mike Haken looks back at our second Conference of 2016*



Dr. David Rudling from the Sussex Archaeological Society introducing his fascinating account of the life and work of Ivan D. Margary

When organising the two conferences, our Projects Manager Jayne Knight and I set out to organise events that not only promoted RRRA, but also commemorated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Ivan Margary, a man whose name is synonymous with the study of Roman roads. As at Portsmouth, our conference at Burn Hall Hotel began with a fascinating look at Margary's life and work delivered by Dr. David Rudling, and highlighted again how little most of us really know about this very private individual. How many of us realised that not only did Margary save Fishbourne Roman Palace for the nation, but that he was also responsible for the purchase and subsequent donation to the National Trust of Avebury stone circle.

The cabaret style layout that we introduced was intended to create an informal, friendly and welcoming feel to the event and encourage discussion amongst delegates, which it certainly seems to have achieved. A feeling of inclusiveness was something we tried to encourage at Portsmouth, and from the comments we have received since it seems that we achieved the same here at Burn Hall. As at Portsmouth, the Discussion groups which concluded each day (a common feature at conferences within industry) were a major contributor to this, and produced highly constructive results.

Given that we were in mid November, with very short daylight hours, planning a visit to a suitable site on Sunday afternoon was simply unrealistic, so instead we organised two full days of talks from an impressive programme of speakers (page 3).



Delegates engaged in discussion during a break.

The reactions we have received from speakers and delegates from both conferences with regard to our holding future annual events have all been extremely positive, and these two events will now form the model on which our future conferences and day schools will be based. We are keen to hold future conferences at different locations around the country, and we are currently investigating options for 2017, ideally at a location close to where current investigation or excavation will be taking place so we can arrange a site visit. This may mean holding a conference in the summer, with the potential issues that may come with it. Your thoughts and suggestions are, as always, very welcome; please send them to Jayne at the following address [jayneknight@romanroads.org](mailto:jayneknight@romanroads.org).



# *The Ivan D Margary Memorial Conference* *Burn Hall Hotel, Huby, York. 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> November 2016*

## *The Programme*

### **SESSION 1 – Margary and his legacy**

#### **Ivan D Margary and his contributions to archaeology**

Dr. David Rudling, Sussex Archaeological Society

#### **Roman Roads in Britain; Margary's magnum Opus online**

Scott Vanderbilt, software developer & creator of RIB online

#### **Margary numbers – 60 years on, what issues need to be addressed?**

Mike Haken, Chairman, Roman Roads Research Association

### **SESSION 2 – Questioning received wisdom**

#### **The road over High Street in the Lake District: is it Roman?**

John Poulter

#### **Wade's Causeway - the end of the Roman Road?**

Dr. Blaise Vyner

### **SESSION 3 – New Technologies, New Approaches**

#### **LiDAR – The game changer**

Bryn Gethin, Warwickshire Archaeology

#### **Geophysical prospecting and Roman roads - an overview**

James Lyall, independent archaeologist & geophysicist

#### **Between the Walls - Modelling movement on the northern frontier**

Graeme Erskine, University of Edinburgh

### **SESSION 4 – New Technologies, New Approaches 2**

#### **The RRRRA Online Database and Archive – A critical resource for research**

Mike Turpin & Mike Haken - Roman Roads Research Association

### **DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Group 1. What are the key questions about Roman roads that remain to be answered? (led by Pete Wilson)

Group 2. Margary Numbering – the Road forward to meet future needs (led by Mike Haken)

Group 3. How we can best obtain, verify and add road data to the RRRRA database (led by Mike Turpin)

### **SESSION 5 – Roman Surveying and the Road Network**

#### **Long distance alignments and the political geography of Conquest Britain.**

Rob Entwistle – independent researcher

#### **Margary's centuriation at Ripe in the context of Roman land surveying in southeast Britain.**

Dr. John Peterson, University of East Anglia

### **SESSION 6 – Some insights into Roman roads in the north 1**

#### **Roman roads in the York area: what do we really know about them?**

Dr. Patrick Ottaway

#### **Margary Through Sheffield: Historical Inaccuracies and Modern Technologies**

David Inglis, University of Sheffield

#### **Margary 712, Manchester to York in Kirklees - not quite where Margary thought it was!**

David Cockman & Nick Brook, Huddersfield Archaeological Society

### **SESSION 7 – Some insights into Roman roads in the north 2**

#### **Revisiting Margary's network in Lancashire & Cumbria**

David Ratledge, Independent Researcher

#### **Scotch Corner; the impact of recent work on our understanding of the early Roman road network**

David Fell, Senior Project Officer, Northern Archaeological Associates

#### **Medieval Progresses, Military Campaigns, and the Roman Road Network II (north)**

Dr. M.C. Bishop – University of Oxford

### **DISCUSSION GROUPS**

Group 1. A Lasting Legacy to Ivan Margary – a Visible Reminder in the Landscape? (led by Mike Haken)

Group 2. Road Planning Alignments & Their Function (led by Rob Entwistle)

Group 3. What contribution can volunteers make to ongoing work on Roman roads? (led by Mike Turpin)

## RRRA Online Forum

One of the greatest successes of our two conferences were, without question, the Discussion Groups, out of which came a huge number of constructive suggestions and ideas. At York, the one that stood out most was that of an on-line Forum, which would allow like-minded people to communicate and collaborate on subjects of their choice.

We are pleased to be able to announce that we have listened to the conference, and have already started work on a prototype version, which currently looks like the image below. Much of the work is being done by two of our members, Alison Spencer and David Brear, with tech. support from Mike Turpin.



Our aim is to produce a working prototype suitable for release to the membership (beta testing if you prefer!) in January - we'll let you know by email as soon as it's ready. In this Prototype version, participation will be for RRRA members only, and the existence of the forum will not be made public until after our first review in March. After that date, we currently intend that participation in discussions will remain restricted to RRRA members, although non-members will be able to view the Forums.

Please remember that this is very experimental, but as it stands we have five basic Forums: Administration, Roads, Projects in Progress, Events, Resources.

The first, Administration, is as the name suggests, restricted to matters concerning the running of the Forum, announcing developments to users, suggestions for new content, etc..

Within the Roads Forum, there will be a separate pre-defined forum for each road that has a Margary number. Those roads with an RRX number from the Ordnance survey, or an RRN number in Wales, and those with no number at all, will be added in due course. There are well over 400 roads in total, and the task of adding those Forums has fallen to one person, so please be patient if they're not all up straight away!

Projects in Progress will have projects, excavations etc. added as soon as we become aware of them. These will not necessarily be RRRA projects, and members will be encouraged to use the Forum to let everyone know of anything new they become aware of. Currently, we are rather arbitrarily dividing the country into North and South, divisions which we hope will evolve into a regional structure that everyone finds easy to use.

The Events Forum is intended as a place where people can let users know about current and future events that may be of interest. Details of suitable events will then be copied from the Forum and added to an Events calendar on our website.

Similarly, the Resources Forum will allow people to inform other users of any useful websites or publications that they become aware of, details of which will be then added to a Resources page on the main website. The huge advantage of the Events and Resources Forums is that it gets details out to users immediately, rather than having to wait for a volunteer to make an addition to the website.

We hope that everyone will find the RRRA Forum a useful and easy to use tool, and that it will help facilitate discussion amongst our membership.

## *Hugh Sandbach Toller 1949 - 2016*

### *A friend remembered*

Hugh Toller died on Tuesday 4th October 2016 at the Royal Trinity Hospice in Clapham, London, after a long illness, and is survived by his widow Julia and son Toby.

Hugh expressly forbade a funeral or memorial service, so instead Julia and Toby held a drinks party (much more suitable!) to celebrate his life. A leaflet they produced for those attending contained an A-Z of some of Hugh's favourite things, a list which sums him up so well that we will reproduce it here:



Archaeology  
 Best bitter  
 Croquet  
 Dad's Army  
 Elephants  
 Fingers (Cadbury's chocolate ones)  
 Golf  
 Harlyn Bay  
 Italy and all things Roman  
 Jump jockeys and their mounts  
 Kittens and cats  
 Linen clothes  
 Museums  
 Newspapers  
 Oysters  
 Paintings – Impressionists and Chagall  
 Quizzes  
 Rolling Stones  
 Snoozing  
 Thai omelettes  
 Understated dress codes  
 Vanilla ice cream  
 Weekends away  
 X-words  
 Yattendon  
 Zakynthos

Hugh was born and raised in Cheshire, and at the age of 12 he was tutored for a scholarship exam to Harrow School by an ex Stowe school Classics teacher who instilled in him a love of the Ancient World. Living near Chester, and visiting the city's Grosvenor Museum with its fine collection of all things Roman, sealed his passion for Roman Archaeology. As with many private passions, however, it was not shared with his parents although they pretended, kindly, to be interested. He developed this archaeological interest as he matured although it was of course always subsidiary to many other elements in his life as a teenager.

After school, his father persuaded him to qualify as an accountant to ensure that he would always be employable, so the prospect of a degree in Roman Archaeology did not arise until he was in his early 20s. The only

## *A friend remembered, continued.....*

undergraduate course available in that subject in 1972 was at the Institute of Archaeology in London, where he graduated in 1975, alongside such alumni as Prof. Anthony King. He then took up a position as Essex Field Archaeologist, where he remained for five years, despite being offered a Fellowship at the British Institute at Ankara in 1976, an opportunity he declined to take up because of his mother's death that year. In 1978 he started work on his PhD in Roman Pottery, which he never completed, eventually getting "tired of poring over bits of Roman pot".

In 1980 Hugh turned to accountancy as his means of making a living, since which time he has acted as Finance Director for many small and medium sized companies. Despite this change of direction, his passion for Roman archaeology (especially Roman roads) never left him, and over the next thirty-six years he was to single-handedly redraw the routes of at least twenty Roman roads in Britain, and was still working on many more. It is no exaggeration to say that Hugh contributed more to Roman roads research than anyone since Ivan Margary. His list of publication over nearly 40 years amounts to some 43 items, almost entirely journal articles which record his work on Roman Roads, predominantly in Wales. With Bob Sylvester, he provided much of the material for the "Roman roads" section in "Roman Frontiers in Wales and the Marches" (ed B Burnham and J Davies 2010, RCAHMW Aberystwyth pp 315 - 332). Curiously, his one stand-alone publication, "Roman Lead Coffins and Ossuaria" (1977, British Archaeological Reports (no. 38), Oxford), was also one of his first, and one of just six *not* on Roman Roads. After nearly forty years it remains a leading work on the subject.

Hugh often claimed that his love for roads was, of necessity, secondary to other interests and to life itself, however his friends and family testify how most of their holidays in Britain and Europe tended to be located, or at least diverted to, somewhere near a road Hugh wanted to look at! Ironically, the fact that he was no longer a professional archaeologist probably contributed to the success of his research method, allowing him to ignore the modern tendency in archaeology to dismiss the work of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century antiquarians. His desire to look at antiquarian work with a removed objectivity resulted in the re-discovery of many roads, such as Low Borrowbridge to Kirkby Thore, and Bainbridge northwards.

His research was by no means dependent on centuries old antiquarian work, however, and he embraced and encouraged the use of modern techniques. He was one of the first to recognise the usefulness of LiDAR to archaeology, especially to Roman roads research, especially after his collaboration with Bryn Gethin, and as a result his output in recent years was substantial, some of it unpublished. Despite his use of this desk-based technology, one of his greatest regrets during his illness, was that he could no longer get out in the hills to do any fieldwork.

His work and his passion finally came together in 2015, when he became a founding member, trustee and Treasurer of the RRRA. He went out his way to encourage other researchers, and many of us within RRRA owe him

a personal debt of gratitude. Organised to the last, some months before his death Hugh ensured that his research was copied in digital form to anyone who might find it useful - he even wrote two paragraphs of this obituary. The RRRA are extremely fortunate that he also bequeathed his entire archive (both digital and hard copy) and library of Roman roads books to the Association. Julia Toller, his widow, has kindly donated the remainder of his archaeology library to us, in total some 350 books. His hope was that it would be of as much use to future researchers as it was to him; we are sure that it will.

Given his premature departure from us, the irony of a printer's typographic error (on the leaflet produced for the party to celebrate his life) giving 2106 as the year of his death, would have made Hugh smile. It is up to us to ensure that he does indeed live on through the legacy of his research and his archive, to that date and beyond.





In mid-November, Mark Richards sent us this photo he had taken of the Roman road (Margary 7e) north of Penrith, where it had been uncovered prior to development. The photo below (Copyright cumbriacrack.com) shows the main road with a well preserved line of kerbstones, with a second metalled surface comprising much smaller cobbles at a lower level, with a ditch beyond it. Members may recall that in the Autumn newsletter we published an aerial photo of cropmarks which appear to show the road from York to Aldborough (Margary 8a) consisting of three carriageways, possibly similar to this one. A few three lane roads have been identified elsewhere, and it may be significant that both these examples are major roads on their way to Civitas capitals.



## *And finally.....*

We hope that you have enjoyed reading this newsletter. Our aim is to use each edition as a means of reporting on anything new that relates to Roman roads in Britain, not simply work carried out by ourselves. To achieve this however, we need to be kept informed. If you have carried out research yourself and would like to have a piece considered for inclusion, or if you hear of any excavations, research, talks, exhibitions, discoveries etc, please contact The Editor.