

Please note:

The photographs originally published in the December 2003 CSAAR Newsletter do not appear in this online edition.



Classical Society

American Academy in Rome

December, 2003 ♦ Dept. of Art and Art History ♦ Oakland University, Rochester MI

President: Tom McGinn

Editor: Susan Wood

The Classical Summer Program, 2003

By Ann Vasaly

Eight teachers who had received Fulbright grants, two undergraduates, seven graduate students, and eight other teachers took part in the 2003 Classical Summer School. Despite enduring one of the hottest summers on record in Rome, the intrepid members of the program not only survived but prospered. The city seemed quieter and less crowded than is usual in June and July. Despite fear by some that Americans might encounter hostility because of the tense political situation accompanying the war in Iraq, we were treated with typical Italian warmth and friendliness. In fact, one cab driver told me how sad he was that so few "beautiful Americans" -- inveterate takers of taxis -- had come to Rome this summer.

archaeological terms was Dr. Bianchi's tour of one of the libraries in Trajan's Forum. Besides showing us some of the extraordinary marble columns and reliefs found on site, Dr. Bianchi pointed out areas of recent excavation in that building that have begun to cast doubt on its traditional identification. Similarly, Nic Terrenato's presentation in the Roman Forum revealed how new approaches to excavation are altering our understanding of the development of the area in the earliest periods. It seems quite possible that we are on the verge of real breakthroughs in our understanding of ancient Roman topography that will substantially change our picture of Roman urbanization in the archaic period.

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As was the case in previous years, a number of scholars contributed to the program by speaking to participants on site: Nicola Terrenato (archaic Forum Romanum), Ili Nagy (Tarquinia, Cerveteri, and Villa Giulia), Kathy Geffcken (history of the area of the Academy/Centro), Joanne Spurza (Ostia Antica), Steve Dyson (Crypta Balbi Museum), Elisabetta Bianchi (Trajan's Forum), Shawna Leigh (Aqueduct Park), Ingrid Rowland (Villa d'Este), Enrico Devoti (Tusculum), Sinclair Bell (Colosseum), Rebecca Benefiel (Epigraphy wing of Terme Museum), and Kim Hartswick (Sperlonga sculptures). Brian Rose kindly agreed to give an illustrated lecture at the Academy about the Ara Pacis. The monument itself is still literally under wraps, and it is not yet clear when Richard Meyer's controversial project for creating a new museum and viewing space will be completed. Perhaps most exciting in

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AMERICAN ACADEMY IN ROME 2004 CLASSICAL SUMMER SCHOOL

The American Academy in Rome announces its annual Summer School, 21 June to 30 July 2004. The Classical Summer School is designed to provide its participants with a well-founded understanding of the growth and development of the ancient city of Rome and its immediate environs from the earliest times to the age of Constantine through a careful study of material remains and literary sources. Daily visits to sites and museums will be preceded and accompanied by lectures intended to offer an introduction to the material and place it within its context. Besides frequent excursions within Rome, the group will take field trips to major sites such as Palestrina, Gabii, the Alban Hills, Ostia, Cerveteri, Tarquinia, and Veii. The 2004 Classical Summer School director is Myles McDonnell. Teachers interested in receiving graduate credit for the Classical Summer School should contact Professor McDonnell for further information. Tuition fees for such credit would be *in addition* to tuition and other fees paid to the Summer School.

Eligibility: Open to high school teachers and graduate students of Latin, ancient history and Classics.

Tuition for the Classical Summer School is \$1,400. Tuition plus fees, room and board will total approximately \$4000, excluding round-trip airfare and personal expenses.

Scholarships: A number of awards from regional and state classical associations and the Classical Society of the American Academy in Rome are available. Award amounts may range from \$50 to over \$4,800. Awards from the Fulbright Commission are also available. Application deadlines for scholarships range from Fall 2003 to Spring 2004. You are advised to consult carefully the listing in the application packet and personally contact the associations as early as possible. Applicants for all scholarships **MUST ALSO** submit complete Classical Summer School applications to the program director.

Application guidelines and further information are available through the Academy's website at www.aarome.org, or by contacting the Programs Department, American Academy in Rome, 7 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022-1001, tel. 212-751-7200, e-mail info@aarome.org.

Deadline: All applications must be mailed by March 1, 2004, to Professor Myles McDonnell, American Academy in Rome, 7 East 60th Street, New York, NY 10022, catulussr@aol.com, telephone 603-646-3394.

For CSAAR scholarships, submit final applications and letters to Dr. Anne Laidlaw, 415 Wingate Road, Baltimore, MD, 21210-2828, phone 410-366-2948, by March 1, 2004.

Chapel

2003 Summer School, Continued

Last year, one of the highlights of the program had been seeing the Augustus of Prima Porta in the restoration laboratory in the Vatican Museums. This year the cleaned and restored Augustus is beautifully displayed in his alcove in the Braccio Nuovo. In the laboratory, however, we saw the rather shocking painted plaster cast which restorers believe accurately reflects the surface coloring of the original statue. We once again ended our out-of-town trips with a trip to the monastery of San Benedetto in Subiaco, a wonderful place to visit in various ways, not least because the scenery going up to the

monastery is spectacular, the frescoes in San Benedetto are impressive, and the fresh trout at the local restaurant is superb.

This summer, as in the two previous ones, I was able to depend on the humor, generosity, and flexibility of the twenty-five Summer School participants and of my assistant director, Liz Marlowe. Their enthusiasm and good spirits made the summer of 2003 a real pleasure and brought to a happy and memorable conclusion my three years as director of the program.✱

MELLON PROFESSOR'S REPORT

By Ingrid Rowland

In 2002-2003 the Academy hosted no fewer than four international archaeological conferences, beginning in September with the *Rei Cretariae Fautores*, organized beautifully by Archer Martin for eight days in the Villa Aurelia. Ingrid Edlund-Berry and John Kenfield followed in November with *Deliciae Fictiles*, a meeting on architectural terracottas that culminated in a wonderful trip to Paestum, Baiae and environs. Fellow Sinclair Bell organized "Role Models: Identity and Assimilation in Ancient Rome and Early Modern Italy, together with Inge Lyse Hansen and Helen Langdon of the British School in Rome, and Robert Hohlfelder brought together scholars for "The Maritime World of Ancient Rome." All of these conferences will publish their proceedings.

In addition, the Friends of the Library brought in Fausto Zevi to speak movingly on new findings at Pozzuoli in memory of John D'Arms. The Study

Collection is being actively entered into our new data base thanks to Archaeology Supervisor Archer Martin and Archaeology Laboratory Assistant Eric de Sena; an intern from Harvard, Christine Murray, is busily cataloguing the contents of all the drawers and file cabinets with archaeological drawings, and we look forward to a move into greatly expanded, more accessible quarters in the Casa Rustica this coming year. The Academy has voted to become an official sponsor of Giuseppe Della Fina's remarkable new School of Etruscology based in Orvieto; lecturers this year have included Giovannangelo Camporeale, Mario Torelli, Stefan Steingraeber, Ingrid Rowland, and Archer Martin. Our two classical summer programs move ahead beautifully under the direction of Ann Vasaly (Classical Summer School) with assistant Elizabeth Marlowe, and the team of Ilaria Romeo and Nicola Terrenato (Summer Program in Archaeology). All this in addition to trips and fellows' presentations.✪

LETTER FROM A SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

By Mark Thorne

My hands are finally dirty, and being dirty never felt so good. Before this summer, I had never set foot in Rome, and for somebody who is making a profession of studying the classics I felt like an astronomer who has yet to gaze through a telescope. I had read lots of books about Italy and Rome, but I didn't have any idea of what it was really like, what the heat was like, whether the fabled "Seven Hills" were really hills at all (yes, they are!), and so on. Thanks to the generosity of the Classical Society of the American Academy in Rome, I was finally given the opportunity to get my hands dirty and discover for myself in a tangible way the reality and the magic of Rome.

After being asked for the hundredth time by my envious friends how my summer in Rome went, I have finally found a good answer: this was the best summer I have ever spent, and at so many levels: professionally, intellectually, socially—and certainly gastronomically! Going in I had a list of goals for the summer, and they were all met in spectacular fashion. I wanted to see the ruins for myself and get a

sense of the lay of the land. Now when I read Juvenal, I can finally understand what the devil he's talking about. I wanted to fire my imagination, and my Latin students certainly have witnessed this when I get carried away talking about the silent grandeur of the Forum or the sheer spectacle of walking into the Colosseum for the first time. I wanted to learn something about Latin epigraphy so that I could introduce some more visuals into my Latin classes, and now my students actually look forward to "Inscription Mondays" when they get to translate something more than what Wheelock gives them. And as a Christian, I was especially looking forward to experiencing the magnificent churches and worshiping God among some of the most wondrous sacred places on earth. The Sistine Chapel is one of those few over-hyped places that still managed to exceed expectations, and the combined effect of all the figures and colors and symbols that lie behind them draws the viewer beyond reality toward the heavenly in a way that I have rarely experienced. The Classical Summer School helped transform all these goals into reality.

One of the first things that struck me was the foolish realization that people still live there! That should not have come as any surprise, but for someone whose experience of “Rome” has been mostly mediated by its former inhabitants who have been dead for the better part of two millennia, the bustling modern city was an unexpected but welcome attraction. My first day in Rome I experienced an authentic Roman taxi ride through Trastevere, and it was worth every one of those five Euros for the entertainment alone! Equally entertaining were the hoards of souvenir vendors to match the hoards of summer visitors, for it helped bring perspective to Martial’s famous summary of the ancient Forum with its potpourri of businessmen, street merchants, and other unsavory types. It was also easy to recall Juvenal’s well-known lament over the distracting noise of the incessant night traffic on the streets—something that anybody whose bedroom overlooked the night route of the 44 bus can understand. Truly, not that much has really changed, and that is part of the magic that Rome has to offer.

For me at least, the real magic however lay in the ancient ruins themselves. When I close my eyes and think of Rome, the first thing I see is the view from the Circus Maximus of the Severan substructures on the southeastern corner of the Palatine ablaze with the reds, browns, and oranges of a summer sunset. Also, the chance to stroll the Via Appia knowing that Cicero’s feet surely felt the same after a long day, or to gaze down upon Rome from atop the Villa Aurelia as a modern-day Porsenna was priceless. Every day’s field trip opened up yet another avenue for understanding the past that was all around me. I am heading toward a dissertation in Lucan, so I was especially curious how the Rome of Nero’s day looked and how that might have influenced the epic poet. Our group was quite impressed by the sheer scale of the Domus Aurea (as well as thankful that we had found shade), but then we were told that the wing preserved under the Baths of Trajan is but a small fraction of the original complex. I had read explanations of its size in terms of hectares and hills before, but only now can I really begin to understand the *monumental* scope of Nero’s ambitions. As I walked past the wall frescoes, many of which have been recently restored, I couldn’t help but wonder that Lucan himself probably walked by that place and looked at the same friezes. It is for just such moments as this when the past and

present collapse into each other with profound force and real understanding that the Classical Summer School exists.

The sights were no less spectacular outside of Rome, from the Etruscan tomb mounds of Cerveteri to the stunning scenery of Terracina. A group favorite was Lake Nemi and its surroundings, and during our visit there I and some friends whetted our appetites at La Cacciatore in Genzano, where I tested the wild boar sausage, a dish somewhat hard to come by back home in eastern Iowa. (That is one Italian specialty I shall not miss!) A few weeks later, on one of the most gorgeous summer days imaginable, I made a return visit on my own and walked all the way down along the lake to the Sanctuary of Diana, home of the famed *rex nemorensis*. While standing completely alone amidst the overgrown ruins of the sanctuary I read aloud selections of Horace, especially the ones in which Diana is mentioned. Perhaps those same words echoed off the valley walls over 2,000 years ago. For a brief moment, I felt not American, not Italian, but *Roman*. Never stronger have I felt the appeal and the immediacy of the classics.

Overall, I could not be happier with the way the program itself was run. Our director, Dr. Ann Vasaly, proved an amazing communicator and she regularly managed to infect all of us with her enthusiasm. She also deserved much credit for her skills as an innovator, a necessary skill when dealing with the Italian government and that oft-repeated refrain: “*Chiuso per restauro*.” She handled with good humor and timely flexibility our most harrowing adventure, which was our trip up the coast to the Roman colony of Cosa when our bus took a wrong turn on a small hill road and then the rest of our group became disoriented while climbing up the citadel on foot. At one point, we even had to send out scouts who sent back periodic messages on cell phones! Thankfully, some things have changed since Roman times. Yet even that day proved memorable and fun, not least because of the spectacular view of the sea from on top. The assistant director Liz Marlowe also did a great job keeping everybody together, teaching us the arcane mysteries of ancient Roman marble types, and happily pointing out all the *spolia*, ancient building material like pillars that have been kindly recycled into churches and other buildings for our modern viewing pleasure. The other students in the program also contributed to the congenial atmosphere that made this

summer such a pleasurable experience. From sharing water bottles on particularly hot days to hanging out over *tramezzini* and pizza to making an epic and ultimately failed but most enjoyable attempt to see *Carmina Burana* performed down at Tor Vergata, my memories of the magnificent ruins are tied up with the marvelous people who shared these experiences with me.

Most gratifying of all were the two major side trips I was able to make by myself. During our four-day break in the middle of July, I traveled to the northwest corner of Italy to the old Roman colony of Aosta (*Augusta Praetoria* in former times), a little publicized city up in the Alps that boasts an amazing set of Roman ruins. Over fifty percent of the original Roman walls are still intact, including the most impressive original city gate! An Augustan triumphal arch also survives on the eastern side of downtown, all reminders of the spread of Roman influence throughout Europe, a trend which we still feel today. The chance to spend two days hiking in the Alps was also an amazing and unforgettable experience—even if I lost my camera to the clutches of gravity along the way! Then as a bookend to my summer travels after the program's end, I set out for Tunisia, intrigued by tales of its many Roman ruins. I was determined to travel there the same way that an ancient Roman would have, so I managed to spend a few days with the very gracious and hospitable Vergilian Society down near Cumae until I could catch a ferry out of Naples. The 18 hour boat ride surrounded by 500 Tunisian men was an experience all its own, but the chance to stand on the boat deck the following morning and watch the Carthaginian shore come slowly into view was priceless. Visions of Vergil danced through my head all day! Four days and numerous long-distance taxi rides later, I had marveled at the amazingly preserved Roman cities of Sbeitla (Lt. *Sufetula*) and Dougga (Lt. *Thugga*) and visited the excellent Bardo Museum in Tunis, which probably boasts the greatest collection of Roman mosaics in the world. Once again, the past had come alive for me in ways that I could never have imagined before, and I loved every minute of it.

For my last night in Rome, I decided to watch a final sunset perched atop the Spanish Steps with a Loeb edition of Lucan as my companion. Surrounded by a city teeming with energy and life, it came as an odd coincidence that I found myself reading the episode from

the first book where the poet recounts how the terrible rumor of Caesar's advance on the city caused an immense panic among its citizens to desert Rome. Quoting from Jane Wilson Joyce's translation: "Thus, aimless, berserk—as if their one hope in times of trouble was putting their native walls behind

them—the mob went rushing through the City at breakneck speed...No man paused at his threshold; all left, blind to what might be their last glimpse of the City they loved.” (1.495–97, 507–09) I had read these lines many times before, but for the first time with a start I finally understood the real weight of what Lucan was describing: how could such a thing be possible? Who among us has not taken that one last stroll through the Forum, that one final visit to the Pantheon, that one last cup of *fragola gelato*? The idea of somebody leaving Rome *without* looking back is crazy, and that was the emotional point that Lucan was making—a point I never would have understood if *I too* had not been preparing to do the very same thing! But unlike Lucan’s *Romani*, who had Caesar to fear, I took my last stroll the Forum, waved to the Palatine, and promised that I would return.✱

“So many monuments, so little time”
T-Shirt design by Mark Thorne

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

By Lester Little

The American Academy in Rome recently concluded an extensive review of the role of archaeology at the Academy and—these overlap but I’m convinced they’re not the same—the role of the Academy in archaeology. The main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

1. that the Advisory Committee on Archaeology be reconstituted;
2. that the Academy continue to grant affiliated status (patrocinio) to selected projects;
3. that the position of Archaeology Supervisor be maintained;
4. that the library collection in this field be kept strong;
5. that the Summer Program in Archaeology continue; and
6. that a major effort be made, particularly via the Academy website, to make information about all Academy programs having to do with

archaeology readily available to all who may be interested.

These conclusions, approved by the Trustees at their meeting in June, represent more continuity than change. However, since it became clear in recent years that many people found they did not really know what the Academy's policies on archaeology were, the real importance of these conclusions may lie in the facts that they were discussed seriously and at length, that they received the full backing of the Committee on the School of Classical Studies as well as of the full Board of Trustees, and, not least, as provided in point # 6, that there be complete transparency about both policies and procedures in this area.

The key to making this renewed commitment to archaeology work well is the reconstituted Advisory Committee, which is to be chaired by the Mellon Professor in the Humanities and have four other members. These four, appointed by the Director in consultation with the Committee on the School of Classical Studies, will serve for terms of three years, which are to be staggered for purposes of continuity. They are to include an Italian colleague and a representative of one of the other foreign academies in Rome. Their main task will be to advise the Director on whether to grant patrocinio to proposed projects; they will be able to do their work both by email and by holding meetings in Rome, with colleagues in the United States participating by telephone or television.

As for the remaining provisions, a search for the Archaeology Supervisor will be announced and organized this autumn; we will be consulting with the Drue Heinz Librarian, Christina Huemer, about the use and expansion of the library's acquisitions funds; continuation of the Summer Program in Archaeology, now under the excellent leadership of Prof. Nicola Terrenato of the University of North Carolina, is assured; and work on overhauling our website is going ahead this autumn.

In addition to the main points dealt with in the report, I should mention that the Publications Committee continues to welcome the submission of book manuscripts to be considered for eventual publication, and that the Academy's Archaeology Lab is about to move from the McKim building to the Casa Rustica. •

REMEMBERING JOHN H. D'ARMS AS TEACHER

By Tom McGinn

In last year's newsletter I issued an invitation to students of John D'Arms to share their recollections of him as a teacher. John had taught many students over the years, in various programs centered at Cumae, in the AAR summer school, which he directed from 1971 to 1973, at the ICCS, where he taught in 1967-1968, and during his many years as Professor at the University of Michigan.

In the latter part of his career, John became Dean of the Graduate School at Michigan before moving on to head the American Council of Learned Societies. These new opportunities did not of course permit him

to continue his work as a teacher in the same way as before. At the same time there is his extensive and important record of publication, which has received ample and deserving treatment in the several memorials that have already appeared in print. Both of these factors seemed to threaten to obscure his considerable achievements as a teacher, which to my mind merit emphasis in their own right.

John was one of the best, I can state with precision one of the two best, classroom teachers I have had the good luck to encounter in many years of learning. After more than twenty years, the intellectual excitement and enthusiasm of the seminar on the

John H. D'Arms, 1934 - 2002

letters of the younger Pliny he directed in the fall of

1980 remains with me and informs much of what I do as a teacher and researcher. I suspect I am not alone in this. The great diversity of method and material he brought to bear in this course, the amazing level of his preparation, his resolute dedication to the enterprise of pedagogy, as well as the inexhaustible nature of his energy and curiosity were and continue to be models for the members of the seminar who continued in the field of Roman Studies. John paid us the supreme compliment of expecting from us no less than he demanded of himself. Emblematic of the style and content of his teaching was his award to each of the participants at the seminar's conclusion of a copy of Alan Macfarlane, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin: A Seventeenth-Century Clergyman* (Cambridge 1970). The Pliny seminar was not by any means the only course I took with him nor the only form in which I benefited from John D'Arms' teaching, but there is something paradigmatic about the experience that makes it worth calling attention to even now. The course was not only about Pliny and Roman social history, it was a course in how to teach these subjects, an aspect which seems to grow in importance with the passing of time.

I am grateful to those who have responded to my invitation, and pleased to publish their reminiscences of John D'Arms as a teacher in this place. The sheer variety of their experiences of John as a teacher is I think

itself testimony to the breadth and depth of his talents.

From Patricia Wickhem:

Just a word about how I came to know of your project because I think it speaks to the kind of inspiring teacher John was. I was a student at the American Academy during the summer of 1972, the recipient of a Fulbright. One of our group has maintained a Newsletter all these years. The fact that so many of the 25-28 members of that group have stayed in touch, if only by that Newsletter says something about the far-reaching effect that summer had on us. Our Newsletter no. 40, edited by Dawn Murphy Kiechle, carried the news of John's death and your project.

That summer when I was introduced to all the great sites in Rome has so many memories, wonderful memories. I still have all my lecture notes and notes from the field. John was so charming and interesting. Some of the alums from that class went on to have great careers in the field. I'm sure you've heard from many of them. Outside the classroom, I remember John sitting down to the piano and playing like a pro in a fancy lounge in the early evening hours.

Needless to say, I am very saddened by his death. In pace requiescat.

From Dawn M. Kiechle:

I had the great good fortune to be in the Classical Summer School led by John in 1972. I have great memories of all the places he took us to and the things we saw and did. Because he was fluent in Italian, he sometimes got us in places even he hadn't planned. He talked with an old guard in the Capitoline Museum who was so grateful for what the Americans had done during WWII that he took us to excavations under the Tabularium which were not open to the public.

One day we went down a path into a cow pasture to see the Ponte Lupo Aqueduct Bridge. It wasn't until a few weeks later, while we were relaxing in the grass after lunch one day in Ostia, that he admitted he had seen vipers on the way down.

The crowning achievement came on our last full day in Rome. He (and the Academy staff) somehow got us permission to climb the

Pantheon Dome. When we got to the top, we had to lie down on our stomachs to look down through the oculus. How many people can say they've done that?!

I know you won't have room for many reminiscences, so these are just a few of the wonderful things we got to do because of John.

From Tolly Boatwright:

John D'Arms' death has hit me hard, but thinking about it – though painful – and articulating why it is so painful have been helpful. During my grad school and dissertating years I certainly never anticipated having any real friendship with John. Although I admired him greatly, I often felt his expectations were completely unreasonable. But after I had received the PhD John and I became great friends. The transformation from (neurotic) student to friend and colleague was extremely significant for me, for it marks my “growing up” as a classicist. I doubt that John consciously knew this, although he did know the depth of my respect and friendship.

John's actions and influence have pervaded my life as a classicist, that is to say at least half my life in the past three decades (give or take a few years). Besides all the obvious – the courses he taught me at U Mich, where he exasperated me to do more careful work as he insisted on intellectual integrity, the broader picture; later, his writing of countless recommendations – John was key to many of my most important decisions and steps. It was he who told me to apply to the Centro for the TA position back in 1976. He was the one who arranged for my subsequent stay in Rome in 1977-79. And he (I assume) suggested me as an evaluator for ACLS a few years ago, a task that similarly opened my eyes and has kept me moving forward intellectually.

So John's death moved me to thinking about my own life as well as his. Most importantly, I hope I can transform this introspection into better emulation of his energy and his support of students and of scholarship. One positive from this terrible loss is my fuller understanding of mentoring. John's death makes me realize more acutely that mentoring is not just constant pats on the back and “all will go well” support or writing recs, though those are significant aspects. A mentor does

not have to be perfect in all, or even most ways; what is key, I think, is that a mentor can also see and accept all the “imperfections” in his/her student, and still move forward with that student. Inevitably, a mentor should push a student at least slightly past the point of comfort. For it is only there where we can continue to grow.

We all miss him terribly. 🌹

From Harry Evans:

I first met John D’Arms in the summer of 1971 when I was a student in the American Academy Summer Session and he was the Professor-in-Charge. It was his first year as Professor in the Summer School, and he told us students that he was learning the ropes at the same time he was teaching us about the ancient city. I remember him, however, from the very first day as a masterful lecturer, both in the classroom and on sites, focused, succinct, and to the point, and always with a keen sense of his audience and the surrounding conditions, which were frequently those of blazing Roman sun and heat. He also never lost his cool when things did not go exactly as planned, as often happens in programs like the Summer Session. The students that summer were as usual a mixed group, some graduate students like me, others older, more experienced teachers in high schools as well as colleges and universities. We all recognized, however, that we were in the capable hands of a gifted *magister*.

Two years later I was back in the Summer Session with John, no longer his student but now the Assistant, and I got to know much better from this second perspective how extraordinary a teacher and mentor he was. Not only did I continue to learn from him about Rome and its environs as he lectured on sites and during field trips, but I also learned how to teach – to be aware of everyone’s energy levels and attention span, especially amid Rome traffic and under the Mediterranean sun, to be able to admit I didn’t know something when asked a difficult question, to keep a sense of humor in face of the

inevitable locked gates, surly *custodi*, and unforeseen delays. John was a patient mentor, always encouraging and supportive when I did make mistakes (and I did, frequently), but also inspiring me to do better the next time. Throughout those six weeks he instilled in me a strong sense that it was important, indeed essential, to give it our all and to get the job done as best we could under the circumstances. I would like to think that such lessons have stayed with me for the last thirty years, but I know that I owe much to someone who taught me them. 🌹

News from the Academy Library

By Christina Huemer, *Drue Heinz Librarian*

October 14, 2003: In a world that too often shouts for our attention, the best news is sometimes the quiet continuity of life in a place we know and love. Today is a beautiful autumn day at the Academy, the sun is casting fine shadows through the umbrella pines in the back garden, and many of the Fellows have departed for a trip to Campania. But the Library is full of people hard at work.

In the Reference Room, a returning Fellow is looking at the new books on display. A professor from Urbino is browsing in the current periodicals. An Italian art historian is seated at a table, doing research on the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a series of publications to be issued by *Espresso*.

In the Arthur Ross Reading Room, a Polish art historian is reading about 16th-century tomb sculpture in Rome. Nearby, an American diplomat's wife is doing research for a book. Upstairs, in the room next to the *ballatoio*, an Italian archaeologist is writing an environmental impact study for a community in Calabria. Her notes, maps, books and a laptop are spread out on the table.

In the lower stacks, this year's Fulbright Fellow is at his carrel, finishing an article on the antiquities collections of the emperor Charles V. Not far away, another Fellow is signing out a book on the Palazzo Farnese. A Polish philologist is translating Cassius Dio. At a catalog terminal, a Norwegian archaeologist is updating the bibliography of a conference paper on cults in ancient Crete. The photocopy machines are humming, as usual. At the other end of the stacks, a Princeton graduate student is reading a book review in *Roma nel Rinascimento*.

This typical day has a timeless quality—it could have happened three weeks ago or ten years ago, and something like it will be happening when you read this. But there have been changes. A major cabling project that took place last year at the Academy has added high-speed connection points throughout the Library, making it possible for members of the Academy community to consult the Internet in connection with their library research. The

card catalog has moved downstairs to make room for seven new computer terminals, offering bibliographic data bases as well as the online catalog. In the music collection, another terminal with earphones allows users to listen to Academy concert recordings or other CDs. Many scholarly books and periodicals are now issued with CDs, and some of them have sound-tracks. Cross-disciplinary studies often involve multimedia: a new look at Piranesi's views of Rome, for example, by Randolph Langenbach, FAAR'03 in historic preservation, shifts effortlessly between the eighteenth century and the twenty-first, providing valuable information for archaeologists and historians as well as conservators. It runs on PowerPoint.

The Library's challenge is to make all these resources easily available in addition to traditional books and journals. For the books do keep coming! We add fifty meters of new books each year and another twenty meters of bound periodicals. It doesn't take a math degree to realize why the shelves are full and why now, each year, we have to put as many volumes into storage as we take in. There are days when we feel bitten off, swallowed up, and regurgitated by the intellectual food chain. But not today--today is one of the good days, the sunlit days, when we have the quiet satisfaction of watching great scholarship happening all around us. ♣

The Villa Sciarra and the Wurtses

By Katherine Geffcken

For a forthcoming collection of essays on the Janiculum, Norma Goldman and I have written a summary of the long history of the Villa Sciarra. Here for the Newsletter I will focus instead on just one period of the villa, when, beginning in 1902, it was owned by the Americans George Washington Wurts and his second wife, Henrietta Tower. At a time when many leading Roman families had lost their property in building speculation, the Wurtses' money enabled them to acquire a princely villa where each May they could entertain lavishly in the pattern of Roman nobles. In fact, in the eyes of many Romans, their taste was far too pretentious. When in 1914 the Academy moved into the McKim, Mead and White Building, the Villa Sciarra became a close neighbor. What was the contact between these American neighbors? The diary of Gorham Phillips Stevens gives some hints.¹

While we know the Wurtses' Villa Sciarra today as a small park, its territory in the nineteenth century extended all the way down to the Aurelian Wall, covering land now crossed by streets named Roselli, Medici, Trent'Aprile, Dandolo, Fabrizi, and Casini. In 1886 its last Barberini owner, Maffeo Barberini Colonna di Sciarra (1850-1925), reached an agreement with a land development company to divide the property, retaining the Casa Barberini and immediate gardens for himself and cutting up all the rest into building lots. But Sciarra kept possession of his house and garden for only ten years. A speculator and extravagant spender, he lost his entire patrimony in 1896. On May 15, 1902, George Wurts bought the Villa Sciarra from the Società di Credito e Industria Edilizia for 300,000 *lire*.

George and Henrietta Wurts both came from affluent Philadelphia families. His father did well in the grain business; Henrietta's father accumulated an immense fortune in coal and steel, with holdings in three states. Not only such large business ventures but also diplomatic careers seem prominent in the Wurts and Tower families. In 1864 George set out on his own diplomatic career, beginning at Madrid, then moving on to Florence, where first he was attaché, then secretary. After the American legation shifted to Rome, he took up residence in the new capital of Italy, remaining until 1883, when he was transferred to St. Petersburg. Despite repeated requests for an ambassadorial post, Wurts was never promoted to the higher rank, and in 1892 he resigned and returned, a private citizen, to Rome.

During his long first stay of fourteen years in Rome, Wurts clearly developed emotional ties to his adopted city. In 1880, he buried, in the Protestant Cemetery, his first wife, Emma Emilia Hyde, described as a charming woman, who sadly died at twenty-nine. Henrietta he probably married during his posting in Russia. She brought him the great wealth he needed for his passionate collecting of antiques, tapestries, armor, porcelain, and silver, but added little grace to their household. To Roman eyes she seemed uneducated and had a fatal tendency to say exactly the wrong thing in social gatherings.²

On arriving at Rome in 1892-3, the Wurtses settled into a splendid apartment on the piano nobile of the Palazzo Antici-Mattei, which they filled to overflowing with their expanding collection of treasures. Ten years later, when they acquired the Villa Sciarra, new projects on a grand scale

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Gorham Stevens was Director of the American Academy from late 1911 until December 31, 1912. From then to the death of Director Jesse Benedict Carter (July, 1917), he was head of the School of Fine Arts at the Academy. Thereafter he was Acting Director, until confirmed as Director in 1919. His diary covers the years 1911-1932.

2

Giorgio Nelso Page's description of Henrietta Wurts has influenced my view of her. The Page family was related to the first Mrs. Wurts, and Giorgio frequently recounts contact with the Wurtses. Even taken with a grain of salt, Giorgio's judgment of Henrietta is wickedly satirical.

*Ruggeri, Apollo and Daphne, now in the
gardens of the Villa Sciarra*

*Ruggeri, Pan and Syrinx, now in the
gardens of the Villa Sciarra*

stimulated them. One can imagine many carriage rides to the Janiculum to plan and supervise the restoration, enlargement, and furnishing of the Casa Barberini. They designed the garden and fountains, and imported exotic trees and plants to fill it. They added swans and peacocks, and, most important, purchased sculpture to decorate the garden. While the sculpture has long been recognized as coming from a Visconti villa (the *stemma* showing a snake swallowing a *putto* prominent in the Fountains of the Satyrs and of the Putti indicates Visconti origins), the precise location was unknown until Amalia Pácia, in 1992, identified it as the Castello (or Villa) Visconti at Brignano, near Bergamo. The sale of the statues, all carved in sandstone, was handled through the well-known Roman dealer Sangiorgi. George and Henrietta Wurts quite possibly never saw the sculpture *in situ* at Brignano.

The design at Brignano, carried out about 1710 by Giovanni Ruggeri, was formal and clever. The great *cortile* had parterres, grand terraces, niches with statues, and an elegant double staircase. Balancing pairs were everywhere evident. For instance, Daphne and Apollo and Pan and Syrinx stood on high pedestals at the top of the double staircase, framing behind them, on an elaborate arch, Diana, Endymion, Endymion's dog, and a *putto*. Ruggeri's clever placement thus features two pairs in which a male is the aggressor (with echoes of Ovid, *Met.* I), leading

up to the crowning group where a female deity advances, looming over the napping Endymion. At close inspection, however, the aggressors do not seem terribly dangerous: Apollo does not actually touch Daphne,³ and Syrinx seems well on her way to freedom, leaving behind a grotesque Pan hugging some reeds. And Diana has a fairly silly grin on her face, while Endymion has been asleep long enough to grow a beard.

The Wurtses broke up Ruggeri's design and scattered the pieces through their park. They placed Diana and Endymion behind a pool along the principal driveway. The other pairs stand about thirty feet apart, amid trees and shrubs, on the gentle slope in front of the Casa Barberini. Set down at eye level, they seem unexpected visitors in the park. The effect of surprise and isolation, perhaps a bit elegiac, is completely different from the original formal design. Here the Wurtses intended to create an elegant Arcadian retreat, filled with satyrs, deities, and

³

Looking at Ruggeri's *Daphne and Apollo* shows that, as Ruggeri claimed, his real master was Bernini. Ruggeri's piece, however, lacks the delicacy and tense drama of Bernini's *Daphne and Apollo* in the Borghese Museum. Ruggeri, a Roman, studied with Carlo Fontana and then went north to Lombardy.

*Ruggeri, Artemis and Endymion, now in the
gardens of the Villa Sciarra.*

personifications, all arranged in a nineteenth century garden style.

George Wurts was not only a collector of objects but also a keen student of gardens. Evelyn March Phillipps, who visited the villa before her death in 1915, praised him as a perfectionist in floriculture: "In the grounds of the Villa Sciarra, sheets of colour catch the eye at every turn, rose-rhododendrons tower aloft, while rare and interesting plants fill the borders." She also described a carpet of brilliant pansies planted in front of the statues of the months. The scent of flowers filled the air, even reaching inside the house, which she called a cool, softly lighted retreat and from which she watched the colors of Rome below and the Alban Hills change as the hours went by. (Phillipps 104).

In this setting of flowers, woodland, sculpture, and fountains, the Wurtses gave lavish parties each May (otherwise they lived in their downtown residence at Palazzo Antici-Mattei). Gorham Stevens mentions many of these events in his diary. In 1915, when he was head of the School of Fine Arts of the Academy, he reports three trips over to Villa Sciarra: May 3 – "Wurts' garden party," May 6 – "Mrs. Wurts' tea," and May 17 – again to "Mrs. Wurtz [sic]" (Stevens often misspells the name!) Such events in May Stevens records again in 1920, 1924, and 1925-27. His first call of all on the Wurtses (in this instance, he wrote "Wurts") occurred on May 16, 1912, when as Director of the Academy he made the rounds to meet the neighbors who would soon see the McKim, Mead and White Building under construction.

Stevens' notations are so terse that it is hard to sense the Wurtses' personalities. Yet occasionally Mrs. Wurts asked questions he thought surprising:

February 4, 1918 – "Mrs. Wurtz wants me to find out about the sale of her auto!" And May 25, 1927 – "Mrs. Wurts [sic] tea. She asked if the Villa Aurelia was to be sold to the Queen of Sweden." For years there was discussion about selling the Villa Aurelia, and many buyers, such as a del Drago and a Caetani, approached Stevens, but no other reference to the Queen of Sweden appears in the diary. Reportedly much preoccupied with status, Henrietta Wurts probably eagerly anticipated adding a queen to her invitation list.

Stevens visited the Villa Sciarra on other, less festive occasions, as part of Janiculum walks (May 15, 1914, and June 1, 1925). Some visits involved Academy Fellows. On March 15, 1915, he "went with Gregory to Würts to study pea cocks [sic]." And indeed, sculptor John Gregory produced a piece with a peacock standing behind a rather stiff nude female (AAR Photographic Archive: Gregory. 272). Then, on May 18, 1917, Stevens called on "Wurtz to get permission for Cowles to draw his swan." This swan many of us know well, since we often pass by Russell Cowles's *Leda and the Swan* hanging on the wall in the Academy bar. At least once, there seems to have been a crisis about the Wurtses' fauna. Stevens firmly states (May 15, 1923 – by which date Stevens had been AAR Director again for five years), "None of our men stole Wurtz's pea hen's eggs."

Russell Cowles, *Leda and the Swan*, now displayed in the coffee bar of the American Academy in Rome.

And he wrote Wurts the next day denying the charge. If we note how through the years Stevens reports pranks perpetrated by Fellows (for instance, shooting the Contessa Stolberg's dogs with a BB gun), it is easy to see why he heard from Wurts about the missing eggs.

Stevens's thorough inspection of the Villa Sciarra with Edward Lawson on July 21, 1918, would have been an interesting walk. A Fellow in Landscape Architecture, Lawson studied many Italian gardens closely. On that July day he may have taken the photograph of Daphne and Apollo now in his file at the Academy's Photographic Archive (Lawson. 316.3). In it, one can see the pair before vandals lopped off pieces.

A further entry in Stevens' diary indicates that the Wurtses could set challenging economic standards in the neighborhood. In 1920 the Academy gardeners went on strike. But they agreed to stay when they were offered the same terms as the Villa Sciarra gardeners (October 28, 1920).

Traffic must have grown near the villa after March 1925, when work crews opened the double arches in the Papal Wall next to the secondary Sciarra entrance closest to the Academy (diary: March 5, 1925). Before then, this intersection of Calandrelli, Roselli, and Seni was a quiet dead end. While carriages and cars going into Villa Sciarra continued to use the main gate across from the top of Via Fabrizi, vehicles headed to new neighborhoods outside the walls increasingly drove through the new passageway, and Villa Sciarra would have seemed less isolated.

The fate of the villa took a different direction after the death of George Wurts at 84 on January 25, 1928. (Two days later, Stevens noted signing the book of condolences). Over the next two years Henrietta planned disposal of her property. On November 25, 1929, she gave the Academy "about 120 fowls, pigeons, and ducks," which became residents of coops set up near the Casa Rustica. Alas, on December 14, "one duck flew away" (back to its home in the Sciarra?). In March 1930, the neighborhood was full of rumors about the villa: March 13 – "Villa Wurtz is to be given to Italian *pensionati*," and March 19 –

"[Italian] artists headed by Sartorio are trying to get the Villa Wurtz from the Government for young government artists." In fact, on March 22, 1930, Mrs. Wurts presented her villa to the Italian government, in the person of Mussolini (whom she greatly admired), to be forever a public park for Romans.⁴ In 1931 the Comune di Roma took over management of the park, and in 1932 the Istituto Italiano degli Studi Germanici was installed in the Casa Barberini, where it is still active today. This institute was an appropriate choice for the Wurtses' house because they so strongly sympathized with Germany that in World War I, many British and Americans ostracized them. It is a tribute to Stevens' courtesy that though never close to the Wurtses personally, he tried to remain always a good neighbor, even during the difficult years of the war.⁵

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I am extremely grateful to Christina Huemer for her enthusiastic interest in the Wurtses and for locating materials in the *Times* and at Palazzo Venezia. Many thanks also to the Academy's Photographic Archive for letting me browse in their materials.

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4

On donating the Villa Sciarra, Mrs. Wurts also gave \$10,000 for its upkeep. In addition, the varied collection assembled by her husband went to the State; this is owned today by the Museo del Palazzo Venezia. On April 3, 1933, Henrietta Wurts died at Lucerne, Switzerland, and is buried together with her husband and the first Mrs. Wurts, in the Protestant Cemetery. Her Estate was evaluated at \$852,370, much of which went to Mussolini (*New York Times* 6/17/33).

5

Other entries in Stevens' diary referring to the Wurtses and their property: October 4, 1917, May 21, 1919, November 27, 1920. This last entry concerns a book by Mr. Wurts that two Russian ladies were translating. So far we have not located any such book, but we can be fairly certain that the Russian women were members of the Fersen-de Daehn household then living in the Villa Sforza Cesarini.

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