

Roman bath house found at Jacks!

Excavation work by the Trust at the former Jacks shop in St Nicholas Street has revealed several important archaeological discoveries beneath the 15th Century part of the building.

The major find is the discovery of the remains of a significant public Roman bath house. Hollow ceramic flues have been found which would have been used to line the walls and floors of the 'hot room', the 'warm room' and sauna-like room (all essential components of substantial Roman baths) so that hot air could circulate and heat the spaces. Some of the broken flue tiles have been incorporated in a fully-lined wall as often occurs in hot rooms and saunas.

Philip Crummy, CAT Director, says *"Major Roman towns across the Roman Empire shared the same suite of public buildings and services. We already knew that Roman Colchester had a theatre (two in fact), many temples, a forum, a circus, town walls, a pressurised water supply, and a robust public drainage system. To this impressive list, we can now add a major public bath house. A lot more work in future will be needed to find out about the layout and development of the building but, thanks to Jacks, we can now at least be sure where it stood (immediately south of the famous Temple of Claudius) and where its main heated rooms were located. This is a very exciting step forward in the exploration of Britain's earliest Roman town!"*



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Roman Circus Centre

The centre is open from Tuesdays to Saturdays, 11am to 4pm plus Bank Holiday Mondays, until Saturday 28th September 2019. The tearoom is open at the same times serving teas, Italian coffees and hot chocolates along with sandwiches and cakes. Eat in or take out into the sunlit garden next to the circus remains. A small gift shop is open.

Bookings for school visits and other group tours are welcome including during closed season and the Centre is available for hire by corporate organisations and societies. Call 01206 501785 for details.

If you haven't visited the Centre recently please pop in to see the latest displays: **Circuses of the Roman Empire** - compare Colchester's circus with others from around the empire; see a permanent exhibition of some of the best of **Peter Frost's Paintings** and on the outside of the building see a display of how the Roman Circus might look if planning developments allow it. Work is under way to renovate the centre's rather fragile reconstructed chariot and also to develop the large model of Roman Colchester.

Can you help?

Cafe volunteers are needed for Summer Saturdays through to 28th September. Could you help out for a few hours on a Saturday in the Roman Circus Centre Café? If you can please contact Samantha on 01206 -501785 Option 6, or email sr@catuk.org. Thank you.

Claudius Gateway Coffee House reopens See page 3

Roman Circus Guided tours are held every Saturday at 12 noon and 1pm.
Tickets (Adults £4.50, under 16s £2, under 5s free) from the cafe.

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Due to the cramped area deep underground in which the excavations have been done, it has not been possible to provide public access to the remains in situ. Works on site have revealed the poor condition of much of the fabric of the Jacks building, and complex remedial works are currently underway to stabilise it and make it safe. However the Trust will be creating a temporary exhibition of these latest finds, as well as recent discoveries from the Circus and from the Mercury Dig, at the Roman Circus Centre.

Dig it
Exhibition
From Tuesday
6th August

The exhibition, called **Dig it**, will start on **Tuesday 6th August** and run until **Saturday 28th September**. This will include a selection of objects from the site and a giant life-size paper reconstruction of Shaft C, one of the six such shafts dug by CAT all of which reached down over 3 metres in depth. The exhibition will open at the same hours as the Centre: Tuesday to Saturday 11am - 4pm.

A historic building recording of Jacks was commissioned by the Borough Council in 2017 and carried out by Mark Baister of CAT. The two buildings fronting onto St Nicholas Street are jettied timber-framed buildings. The left-hand building - No 5 - is a late 15th-century building whilst No 6 is a late 16th/early 17th-century structure. Very little of the original timber frames remain and much of what does remain are later additions.

At the turn of the 20th century the buildings were occupied by Bateman & Wyncoll, drapers & tailors who were in occupation until 1930 when for a few years the business was carried on by Story & Smith - see their 1931 advert. The Bateman's had been woollen drapers in Colchester at least since the 1850s.

During the war No 6 was occupied by George Hazell and in 1948 J Kettle moved in. The shop was first known as Jacks in 1959 and then as the Surplus Centre during the 1960's but J Kettle was presumably Jack of Jacks Famous Supplies Store which continued until 2013 and is still missed by many of us.



Aquila at Roman Circus Centre

The game Aquila is an interpretation of a 2,000-year-old game board and pieces discovered in Stanway by the Trust in 1996. Alex Jones created this simple-to-learn and addictive strategy game based on a Roman board-game *ludus latrunculorum*. Aquila is a game for two players aged 10 years and over. There is now a gameboard with instructions permanently set up at the Centre - so you can drop in at any time to play.

Colchester Apps update

Colchester Roman Circus - Explore Roman Colchester with this educational app made in Colchester with an age rating of 4+. with a free app for Android phones & tablets (requires Android 4.1 or above) and for iPhone & iPad (compatible with iOS 11).

Ancient Colchester - This free app allows you to explore and delve deeper into the rich heritage and historic sights of Colchester. The app is a handy guide, companion and fun-filled way to enrich your visit and bring the history to life including sounds and a walking trail. This is a free app for Android phones & tablets (requires Android 4.1 or above) and for iPhone & iPad (compatible with iOS 11),

Colchester Young Archaeologists If you know of any young people who you think might be interested in archaeology please let them know about the Colchester Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC). The Club is open to everyone aged 8–16 years and members get involved in all sorts of activities, including visiting and investigating archaeological sites and historic places, trying out traditional crafts, taking part in excavations, and lots more. YAC is based at Roman Circus House in Colchester and usually meets once a month. A team of volunteers runs the club: if you want to know more or would like to get involved please contact Barbara Butler (Tel:07808 968766) barbara@peterbutlerdesign.co.uk

Claudius Gateway Coffee House reopens

The Claudius Gateway Coffee House has reopened in the Castle Bailey (through Museum Street) in front of the castle. It is now possible again to enjoy coffee and cake whilst examining the exposed remains of the monumental Roman arcade which fronted the precinct of the Temple of Claudius ... but that is not all - by using the Coffee House you will be supporting the **Colchester Rough Sleepers Group**.



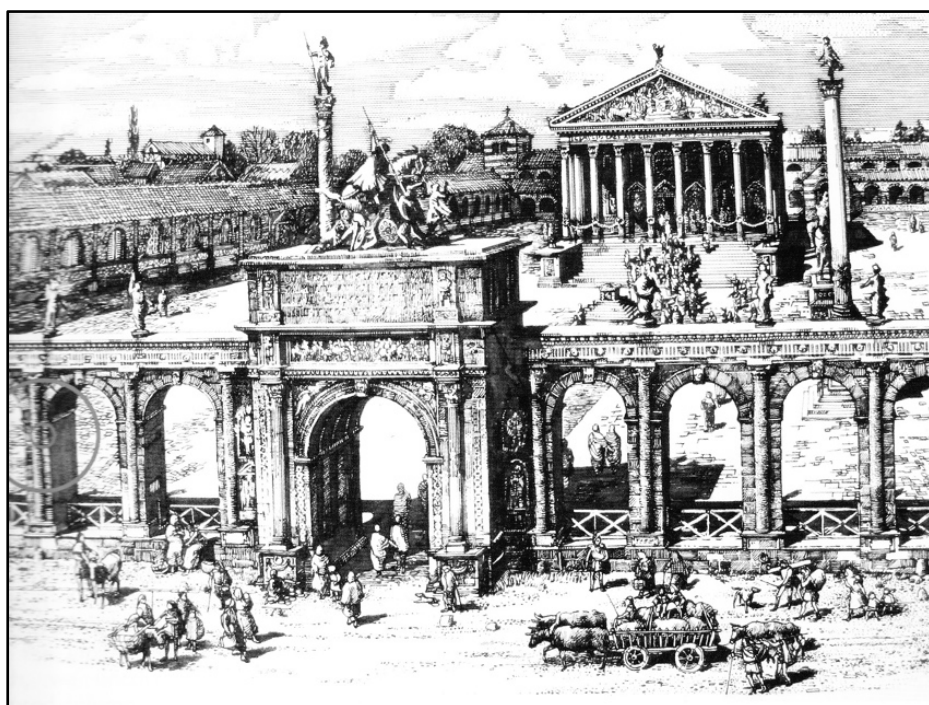
Claudius Gateway Coffee House

Castle Bailey

Now open
Monday - Saturday
9am - 5pm

Three 3 metre-square windows in the floor reveal the remains of part of the base of the giant Roman arcade below. These remains are in three parts, ie: the bases of three piers which supported four of the 26 arches making up the arcade, the remains of four low walls which blocked the lowest part of the arches, and part of the massive foundation on which the arcade was built. Interpretation for visitors and customers is provided by informative display panels which provide details about the nature of the arcade and the transition of the Temple of Claudius into the Norman castle keep and then to Colchester Castle Museum. The computer-generated imagery presentation will once again be shown in a loop on a large screen.

The monumental arcade, and the temple, may have both been built in the AD 50s. The arcade, which was first excavated in the 1960s, would have had a special association with the Roman circus. On race days, a long procession or pompa – rather like a modern carnival – would have led from the Temple of Claudius, through the central archway in the arcade, to the Roman circus and through its ceremonial archway at the curved end. The pompa would have included the figures of Roman gods and goddesses carried on litters and the racing-chariots and horses, as well as musicians, dancers, and stilt-walkers representing the gods and goddesses. The figures of the gods would then have presided over the races at the Roman circus. The gods and goddesses associated with the Roman circus were some of the most powerful in Roman mythology, ie: Sol, the sun; Luna, the moon; Cybele, the great mother goddess of the earth; and even Neptune, god of the sea. The Temple of Claudius was dedicated to the deified Roman emperor Claudius.



Peter Froste's reconstruction of the Arcade

Back by popular demand!

A fabulous concert of music from opera, operetta, and musical theatre - everything from Bizet, Delibes and Gilbert & Sullivan, via Cole Porter and Bernstein, to Sondheim, Lloyd Webber, the Beatles and Queen!

Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, CO2 7GZ

Saturday 28th September at 7.30pm

Tickets (including drink and nibbles) £12 (£10 concessions) can be purchased at the café during opening hours. Or email Howard Brooks on hb@catuk.org, or call on 07415 952 891.



Parking - disabled on site at RCH. Pay-and Display Car parks at Butt Road (3 minutes west), and Napier Road (5 min east).

Friends Coach Trip - Saturday 5th October

Our second trip for 2019 will be to **Chislehurst Caves** and **Scadbury Manor** on **Saturday 5th October**. The Caves were created for mining flint and chalk between the 13th and 19th centuries. For more information visit their website at <http://www.chislehurst-caves.co.uk/>. Scadbury Manor is a medieval moated manor house site owned by the Walsingham family in the 15th century and featured recently in *Current Archaeology*. It is situated in a local nature reserve and is being excavated by the Orpington and District Archaeological Society. Visit their website at



<http://www.odas.org.uk/scadbury/> for further information. Our tour will be led by the site

director. Our coach will leave from outside the Greyfriars Hotel at **9:30am** and arrive back at around **6pm**. To book please fill up the slip below and send it with a cheque payable to The Friends of the Colchester Archaeological Trust to: Brenda May, 13 Field Way WIVENHOE . CO7 9HG

VISIT TO SCADBURY MANOR & CHISLEHURST CAVES

Saturday 5th October 2019

Please reserve place(s) @ £28 each for the visit to Scadbury Manor

Name(s)

Address

Telephone no.: Email:

Please make cheque payable to The Friends of the Colchester Archaeological Trust and post to Brenda May, 13 Field Way WIVENHOE . CO7 9HG