



# RFG Annual Report

## 2016/17

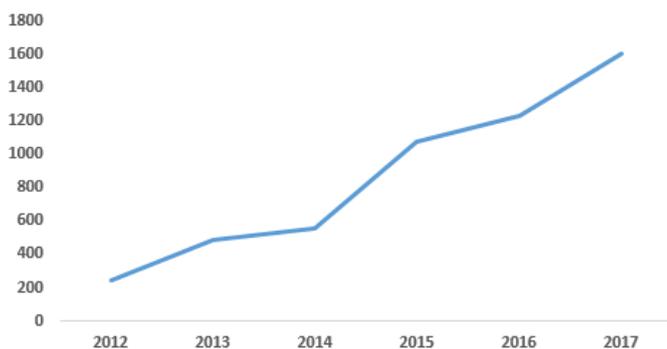


Chairman: Justine Bayley  
Minutes Secretary: Evan Chapman  
Treasurer: Jenny Hall  
Membership Secretary: Angela Wardle  
Communications Secretary: Nicola Hembrey  
Meetings coordinator: Stephen Greep  
Editor: Matt Fittock  
Datasheet co-ordinator: Gill Dunn  
Ordinary members: Barbara Birley, Jörn Schuster, Sally Worrell

The last year saw the consolidation and continuation of recent initiatives and other new developments for RFG members. During the calendar year of 2016 our membership secretary, Angela Wardle, reports that **membership numbers** rose to 214, an increase of 18% - the highest level recorded since its foundation in 1987. During the first few months of 2017 membership has risen further (at the time of writing it stood at 220). RFG now has a very solid **financial base** which is enabling us to deliver an increasing number of benefits to members.

Not only is our membership increasing, but we are getting more popular online too! Our **twitter** account, run by Nicola Hembrey, now has increased over the last twelve months from under a thousand to 1524, with several original tweets each week. Our **website**, also run by Nicola, was relaunched in October 2015, showing an increasing number of visits. It is in top position on Google for anyone searching for “Roman Finds”, and on page one for “Roman Archaeology Conferences” searches. In January 2017 alone there were 1603 unique visitors, with an average of 1.5 visits per visitor, a total no. of visits 2429) and a total number of 6155 page views. The most visited pages, so far in 2017, are (unsurprisingly) the home page, the meetings page and downloads of Lucerna and Datasheets. An analysis of visits to the website in January shows how increasingly popular it is becoming.

Unique website visits : month of January



The addition of new functionality to the site over time, including Members’ Resources, the download of the out-of-print Manning publication, along with access to the full archive of 25 years of Lucerna and datasheets, make the site a valuable and interesting place for Members to visit. The forthcoming video area will extend this rich resource to the public and should increase the profile of the RFG still further. We are exceptionally grateful to Jon Sloper of Alacrify, who has provided his advice, development time and professional expertise free of charge for the past eight years.

The RFG 2016 spring meeting in York saw the public showing of the first short **films** about particular categories of Roman finds organised by Jenny Hall. 12 films are now available for viewing on our website (<http://www.romanfindsgroup.org.uk/roman+finds+group+videos>), where links and additional information about the objects depicted will shortly be added. The RFG is very grateful to have worked with the Centre for Interdisciplinary Artefact Studies at Newcastle University on this first set of films. We have completed a second tranche of 10 films, funded by the Roman Research Trust, and more are planned for the next financial year.

Last year’s AGM was held in York during the April two-day **conference** in York, Finds from Roman York, Brigantia and Beyond, organised by Stephen Greep. The meeting was attended by 93 people (the highest number for a meeting outside London) organised jointly with the University of York and Yorkshire Museums Trust. Delegates

heard 20 speakers including a keynote presentation by author, Lindsey Davis, with a reception and private viewing of the Roman Galleries at the Yorkshire Museum. A second two-day meeting in September, Town and Country in Southern Britain, was organised by Matt Fittock in conjunction with the University of Reading. With 80 delegates and a further 20 speakers this means that during the year 173 people heard 40 speakers on a wide range of topics concerning Roman material culture. Conferences in 2017 will be in St Albans and Salisbury with events in Canterbury and London planned for 2018. RFG members will continue to benefit from reduced entry fees to all our meetings.

Matt Fittock, assisted by Emily Blanchard, continued as editor of **Lucerna**, producing a further two meaty volumes (51 and 52) with the new full-colour cover, introduced the previous year. Each issue contained summaries of the biannual conferences. Matt would welcome offers and suggestions for articles and any other content. Distributed along with *Lucerna* have been new additions to the RFG series of datasheets, edited by Gillian Dunn, on spindle whorls and weighing instruments with more in the pipeline. Gill is always looking for more volunteers and, with the film project underway, the detailed *datasheets* are an even more important component of what the RFG offers to Members.

During the last year RFG has awarded £1,000 in **grants** (assessed by Stephen Greep, Nicola Hembrey, Sally Worrell and Jenny Hall) for work on finds related projects including spindle whorls from Vindolanda, weighing equipment and Polden Hill brooches. A further £1,000 is available in the current year; criteria are to be found on the RFG web site. Alongside supporting research and publication of Roman Small Finds, these grants have contributed to the production of datasheets and presentations at RFG meetings.

Twenty-one members took advantage of a reduced cost, four year **Instrumentum** membership facilitated by Jenny Hall who was also instrumental in Members' recent opportunity to purchase a number of finds related books at a specially discounted rate from Archeopress (not to mention the book signing by Lindsey David in York with discounted copies of her new book *Graveyard of the Hesperides*).

During the year the **committee** met twice. Thanks, through the good offices of Sally Worrell, to the Institute of Archaeology, London for providing the venue.