

The Annual Fund....

Transforming lives for Classics students

Thanks to Annual Fund grants, we've been able to subsidise undergraduate study trips to Rome. Being able to offer financial assistance has meant that the trips are accessible to as many students as possible.

The Annual Fund has also purchased high tech equipment to develop Dr Matthew Nicholls' innovative digital models of the city of Rome. The project is now producing wonderfully detailed images of the city as it appeared c.AD315, used in lectures at Reading and talks around the country, and featured in international books and magazines.



The best thing about the trips to Rome is the positive feedback from students who've visited the city, and seen the subject of their studies first hand. We see the beneficial results in their coursework and exams all the time.

Something unexpected that has come out of Matthew Nicholls' digital modelling project is the scope for student involvement. The project initially involved Dr Nicholls making detailed architectural models himself, but as its size and ambition increased to take in the whole ancient city, he started to recruit undergraduate and graduate student helpers. They've made substantial contributions to his project, and the work experience they've gained has helped them into careers in finance and management and archaeological illustration. The success of this new element of the project has spun off into a current 3rd year undergraduate module, 'Roman Cities', contributed to Dr Nicholls' appointment as a University Teaching Fellow, and led to the award of a substantial grant to make a digital model of Roman Silchester, with student involvement planned throughout.

Next year, the Classics department hopes to take another study trip to Rome, where students will be able to benefit from reconstruction images drawn from Dr Nicholls' digital model. Meanwhile, the new Silchester modelling project will be getting underway and students in various modules will benefit from the digital model of ancient Rome.

These projects:

- Enthuse students by taking them to the sites of ancient Rome
- Produce valuable digital material for publication, outreach, and lectures
- Involve students directly in large cutting-edge digital and ancient historical research projects

Image below: © Matthew Nicholls, 2011

