

# DIGGING IN SEGNI

July 28, 2013   Stephen Kay   Bronze Age, Day of Archaeology 2013, Excavation, Medieval, Roman   British School at Rome, Excavation, Segni

The 26th July is the 5th day of excavation in a 4 week season of the Segni Project. Established in 2012, the 3 year joint research by the British School at Rome and the Museo Archeologico di Segni, co-directed by Francesco Maria Cifarelli and Christopher Smith, aims to explore the urban development of this important Latin town, from its establishment in the Archaic period through to the medieval period. This morning, the 20-strong team of volunteers is divided over two excavation sites, one in the heart of Segni in Piazza Santa Maria and one on the edge of the acropolis at Prato Felici. Over the course of the day I will be moving between each site, overseeing the excavations together with my Italian colleague Federica.

At the site of Prato Felici the team, supervised by Camilla, is following on from the initial exploratory work we undertook last year. Following a combined geophysical survey, which used magnetometry, resistivity and georadar, clearance was made of a wall whose crest was visible on the surface. Nothing is previously known about the site, with hypotheses ranging from a substructure to a temple complex, similar to that of Juno Moneta close by. Despite the searing heat, the team is making fantastic progress after only 4 days. All sides of the structure have now been located, revealing a building that covers an area of 13 x 37m. Early indications suggest a function associated to water, due to a thick floor in *cocciopesto* and a raised boarder that runs around the edge of the room. Two teams of students, from UK and other European Universities, are working on emptying a small area, which a test trench last year suggests was back-filled in the 2nd century AD. Above this team, as the site lies on a considerable slope, another group is exploring the area to the west of the structure, to see if it continues further. Finally, to the south of the building another group is exploring the stratigraphy that lies under and beyond the south wall. Last year a small test trench revealed layers dating to the Bronze Age, the first time this material has been found in context in Segni.



*Excavation 2013*

At the excavation in Piazza Santa Maria, the team is working on enlarging the excavation of 2012. The aims of the excavation are two fold: firstly to assess whether the square was the area of the Roman Forum and secondly whether it was the location of the earlier medieval cathedral. Last year the excavation, following on from the successful georadar survey, revealed a number of walls and floors, and most interestingly a well preserved polychrome mosaic. Today the team are working on removing the more modern stratigraphy, associated to various phases of the relaying of the square. This also involves emptying out modern service trenches, the pipelines in which will be moved outside the excavation by the water board on Monday. Over the next few weeks the team will focus on removing the metre of stratigraphy that overlies the mosaic, with the aim of revealing the full room of this probable *domus*.