This brief report is dedicated to all of the students, the
volunteers, and friends who through their enthusiasm,
dedication and generosity made possible the following
study in the area of Marsiliana d’Albegna.

Aidan, Duccio, Elena, Lorella, Sara, Silvia.
INDICE

Archaeology and history of an ancient territory p. 5
The Marsiliana d’Albegna Estate p. 9
The Casa delle Anfore p. 11
The necropolis of the Perazzeta plain p. 24
The necropolis of Macchiabuia p. 27
Virtual archaeology p. 36
Bibliography p. 39
Activities 2012 p. 43
Contacts p. 45
Sponsors of Marsiliana d’Albegna Project p. 47
ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF AN ANCIENT TERRITORY

In 1908, during construction work on a building to store agricultural machinery, not far from the present centre of Marsiliana, in the area called Banditella, an extensive necropolis was discovered. This necropolis, containing more than a hundred tombs of various types was excavated over the succeeding years by Prince Don Tommaso Corsini, the owner of the estate. The large number of finds brought to light in the course of the excavations, published in the formal report on the area by Antonio Minto, illustrate the history of an important aristocratic community which controlled the territory from the end of the eighth and through the seventh century BC.

During the 1980’s there was a trial excavation, and occasional superficial investigations undertaken by the Archaeological Superintendent of Tuscany.

In 2002 The University of Siena, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage in Tuscany undertook the first systematic programme of research and excavation, with the aim of expanding the study of this important centre in the Grosseto area of The Maremma, and promoting the area more widely.

The project was enlarged in 2009 by the affiliation of the Association (non-profit) Etruria Nova ONLUS, founded and staffed by professional archaeologists. The Association took on responsibility for the organisation and management of fieldwork in the area.

Figure 1. Students and volunteers during the topographic survey in Marsiliana d’Albegna.

Recognising that in today’s world archaeology needs to be practical and sensitive to the local community’s heritage, while also contributing to a potential for tourism in the region, the Association chose to promote research through the establishment of a series of
international field schools which each year would attract scores of students and volunteers from all parts of the world.

**Figure 2.** Students and volunteers during the excavation and the workshop.

**Figure 3.** Students and volunteers visiting some supporters in the territory of Grosseto.

Alongside the excavation and laboratory work involved in the field schools, opportunities are offered to the participants, through excursions and visits, to get to know Marsiliana and the surrounding area, not only in terms of the landscape, its history and archaeology, but also aspects of the economy and the typical products of the region, and experience the real traditional tastes of The Maremma.
The modern village of Marsiliana d’Albegna is in the municipality of Manciano, in the province of Grosseto. It occupies the south-eastern branch of the floodplain of the Albegna river, where the valley leaves the plains and winds into the hills. Its strategic position, overlooking one of the most important waterways of the region, and thus controlling trade and communication, together with fertile soils have favoured, since ancient times, the founding and development of numerous settlements visible in its archaeology.

The oldest evidence comes from the Castle Hill, a hillock which, although modest in height, is very noticeable from the plain, being the most prominent feature in the area. The Princes of the Corsini family have had a residence, the castle, atop this hill since 1761. Chance finds dating to the Middle Bronze Age (13th-12th century BC.) have been found at the base of the hill, but there is substantial evidence of occupation near the summit, dating to the Late Bronze Age (12th century BC.). In the Iron Age Marsiliana, like the surrounding area, appears to have been abandoned, and then re-occupied on a permanent basis from the eighth century BC. (Orientalizing Period) when a wealthy community, probably originating in the Etruscan city of Vulci established itself in the area.

Finds from this period are found not only on the Castle Hill, but also on the slopes of the hills and down into the plain, as is the case of the olive grove at Banditella, the hill of Macchiabuia, the Banditella and Perazzeta plains, these being the principal sites excavated to date. The Archaic Period saw both an expansion of the habitation sites, and a more intensive exploitation of the territory.
THE CASA DELLE ANFORE

In 2005, during a survey on the estate, in the area of Poggio Alto, not far from the present-day village of Marsiliana and the Castle Hill, the remains of a substantial building were found. Judging from dateable finds this site was occupied from the last quarter of the sixth to the end of the fifth century BC.

The building, named Casa delle Anfore due to the large number of Etruscan amphorae which were immediately evident within it, was the subject of a series of excavations beginning in 2006 with the aim of uncovering the whole of the complex and its function(s).

The building, with a rectangular plan and extending over 400m2, is delimited by a massive perimeter wall of roughly dressed stones, bound with clay, and reinforced with large angular stones. The eastern façade is distinguished by the presence of a wide portico, beneath which were preserved a large number of pottery vessels.

Figure 5. The remains of the casa delle anfore, at the time of discovery.

Figure 6. The etruscan amphora, which gave the name at the “Casa delle Anfore”.

The building, with a rectangular plan and extending over 400m2, is delimited by a massive perimeter wall of roughly dressed stones, bound with clay, and reinforced with large angular stones. The eastern façade is distinguished by the presence of a wide portico, beneath which were preserved a large number of pottery vessels.
Some of these were arranged regularly on the ground surface, others were originally set on shelves or racks affixed to the walls.

Figure 7. Graphical reconstruction of the façade of the building (by Duccio Calamandrei).

The portico led, on the east, to a wide yard with a surface formed of small stones, graded and compacted. In the centre of the portico, giving directly onto the yard was the single entrance to the structure. This was a wide doorway, of which the bases of the stone jambs survive. It was presumably fitted with a wooden frame. The entrance opened onto a rectangular covered lobby with a beaten clay floor, which in turn led to a large open courtyard.

The surface of this courtyard, also in beaten clay, was characterised by a series of slopes tending downwards to a central area, the whole delimited by lines of Travertine slabs.

Figure 8. Remains of interred jag used as a filter for rainwater destined to be stored in the cistern.

In this area there was probably a cistern, which has yet to be investigated archaeologically. Rain-water collected from the building’s roof was probably directed to the cistern, after being filtered by passing through a large vessel set in the ground, and a
channel filled with gravel. The remains of the vessel and the channel which acted as a filter are visible adjacent to the entrance.

The central courtyard gave access to several small rectangular rooms, only some of which have been investigated archaeologically to date.

**Figure 9.** The Casa delle Anfore, at the end of the 2009 season.

These rooms have walls built without foundation trenches, consisting of a base in stone, which protected the building from ground water and surmounted by sun-dried clay blocks - a building technique which was common in ancient Etruria, and was subsequently used by the Romans.

As a whole, the Casa delle Anfore appeared to be interpretable as a rural domestic structure which in certain aspects of its construction was analogous to some urban and suburban houses typical of private dwellings of the Late Archaic and Classical periods of Central/Southern Etruria and ancient Lazio.

**Figure 10.** Remains of the “bandit’s hut”, built in the ruins of the Casa delle Anfore.

At the end of the nineteenth or beginning of the twentieth century a small, elliptical, hut was constructed in the central
courtyard, made from stones and other materials recovered from the ruins of the Casa delle Anfore, complete with small hearth, and a bench or work-surface cut into the (geological) natural ground.

In and around the hut several wooden buttons were discovered, and a small devotional medallion in Bronze, depicting on the obverse the Madonna of Montenero, and on the reverse Saint Venanzio the Martyr, protector of the spiritually and materially fallen. In a small hiding-place set within one of the hut walls were found the barrel and other metallic parts of a pistol dateable to between 1840 and 1870.

The finds, together with the location of the site, some distance away from the village, and hidden in the undergrowth of the Poggio Alto, suggests the hypothesis that the structure may have been the shelter of one of the bandits who, at that time, frequented the area around Marsiliana.

_Elena Santoro_

A brief description of the rooms investigated to date

Through excavations between 2006 and 2010 it has been possible to investigate, in detail, six of the rooms which open onto the central courtyard.

_Figure 11_. Plan of the Casa dell’Anfore, at the end of the 2010 season. The numbers and letters indicate positions of rooms and features mentioned in the text.
The outer yard and the portico

The investigation of the area facing the eastern façade of the building, with the principal entrance has produced a lot of interesting information. Lined up along the outside wall, for example, were several large pottery vessels, together with other pottery forms in positions which suggest the existence of wooden shelves or racks. The consistent inclusion of roof tiles in the rubble covering the external area and the positions of the large vessels suggests that the area was originally covered by a portico, a hypothesis supported by the presence of a beaten clay surface running along the perimeter wall. Other vessels were lined up along the external wall of room A.

Room “I”. The ancient entrance

The entrance, as well as giving access, was also an area in which vessels and objects for the storage of foodstuffs were kept.

Adjacent to one side of the entrance, on the outside of the building, were discovered an Etruscan amphora and another large vessel, in which smaller pottery vessels were stored. These consisted of objects in much older styles, and it is possible that the context may be interpreted as a ritual offering, perhaps deposited at the foundation of the building.

Rooms “A”, “B”, “C” and “E”: the storage

On the eastern side of the central courtyard, to the left of the entrance, are two small, square, rooms having floors made of beaten clay with the addition of fine gravel. In these rooms were found a large number of pottery vessels, mainly amphorae, but also large jars and smaller vessels.

Chemical analysis of the surfaces of these containers has revealed the presence of residues which show that they contained olive oil and fish.
The pottery was arranged partly on the floor surface, against the walls of the room, and partly on wooden shelves or racks.

**Room “H”: an ancient olive-press?**

To the northeast of the central courtyard there is a large quadrangular room characterised by massive walls built completely in stone, in contrast to the method of construction of the walls in the rest of the building.

Inside the room, which is not yet completely excavated, a large number of vessels for the storage of foodstuffs was recovered, mainly large storage jars, which suggests that this room should be included, with the preceding ones, in the part of the building given over to production.

The presence of a narrow dividing wall set in the middle of the room may in this case indicate the existence of an ancient olive-press.
The next season of excavation, in September and October 2011, will be fundamental for the completion of the investigation of this room, and the clarification of the questions of its purpose.

Sara De Sanctis, Lorella Molinaro, Aidan Mulkerrin, Elena Santoro

The necropolis of the Perazzeta Plain

From 2003 to 2007 the necropolis of Perazzeta, where excavation was begun by Prince Tommaso Corsini at the beginning of the twentieth century, was marked by a number of archaeological discoveries, principally in the area of farm 145 (Prop. Domenico Brizzi).
In the course of investigation, the remains of two monumental tombs were comprehensively excavated.

This structure delimits and contained a high tumulus of earth whose function was to indicate the position of the burial chamber itself. The chamber, however has not survived. The large tumulus covered and protected an earlier burial monument, consisting of a circle, 12.6 metres in diameter, composed of stone blocks, which surrounded a burial chamber constructed within a deep rectangular shaft.

Inside this burial chamber, marked by a firm layer of river pebbles, the remains of the deposition of a male were found. These were dated to the second quarter of the seventh century BC. The grave goods included pottery, and metal vessels and weapons.
THE NECROPOLIS OF MACCHIABUIA

During the autumn of 2006 in the course of an archaeological survey of the Corsini estate a necropolis of some forty tombs was identified. They are all of a ring-tomb type.

The tombs, associated with a larger necropolis already identified, and partly excavated by Prince Tommaso Corsini from 1896 onward, were, almost all already partially damaged by illegal excavations undertaken mainly in the 1990’s by local “tomb robbers”.

In excavations in 2009 and 2010 four of these tombs were completely excavated. They can now be dated to the period between the end of the eighth and the first quarter of the seventh centuries BC.

In spite of the damage done in the course of illegal excavations and the fact that the material recovered are still being restored and analysed, a preliminary assessment is possible. This explains a series of features which may contribute to the clarification of the original form and function of these structures.
Although there are differences, some superficial, others more significant, in general the tombs are built within shafts of varying depths, and are marked on the surface by small earthen tumuli, encircled by a ring of stones, of between 4 and 9 metres in diameter.

**Figure 21.** View of the stone circle of an excavated tomb located in the necropolis of Macchiabuia.

The circles are formed with lines of blocks of Travertine and unworked stone, though sometimes embellished by the inclusion of blue/violet slate slabs, perhaps chosen for particular chromatic effect.

The stones of the circles are almost all set in place on a slight incline laid directly on a contemporary surface of stamped earth, while three or four in each circle as well as being of larger dimensions, are also more firmly fixed in the ground, perhaps to mark in a permanent manner the maximum extent of each tomb.

Beneath each circle of stones there is a cut which, in the centre, deepens into a rectangular, shallow, shaft with vertical walls and level base, in which is built the funerary chamber.

The chamber takes the form of a wooden chamber which sometimes seems to reproduce, in the arrangement of the internal materials, the inside of a house. The floors, which have left no traces, were probably made of wood, sometimes laid on a layer of small pebbles. The ceiling was low, and was formed of beams and cross-beams laid directly on the edges of the shaft.

On top of the ceiling of each chamber, to mark and protect the tomb, a tumulus was raised. This was up to 2m in height, and composed of a series of layers of earth and small stones, sealed on the surface by a layer of clay.
In one case, on the top of the tumulus there was evidence of a platform, approximately rectangular, marked by a cordon of stones and floored with a large slab of limestone laid flat. The platform which was evidently associated with the performance of rituals connected to the cult of the dead, was probably accessible via a ramp or a flight of steps made of earth or wood. Two large slabs, found at the edge of the circle surrounding the tumulus may have been associated with this ramp.

Where tombs were used for multiple burials access to the chamber was probably through a vertical shaft (caditoia) which penetrated the whole of the tumulus. Current research casts little light on these access shafts: those which have been excavated seem always to have been affected by the action of illegal diggers and the traces which do remain consist of complex intercut layers.
Figure 24. Cleaning and recovery of remains of a buried woman at Macchiabuia’s necropolis.

Figure 25. Cleaning and recovery of funerary objects found in one of the tombs at Macchiabuia’s necropolis.

Figure 26. Remains of a cauldron and of a bronze helmet inside one of the tombs at Macchiabuia’s necropolis.
Both cremated remains and inhumations have been recovered from the tombs, together with grave goods consisting of pottery and metal vessels, weapons and jewelry. These indicate that the necropolis was used by the aristocratic groups who held control of the area of Marsiliana.

Silvia Pallecchi

**VIRTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY**

The study and explanation of day-to-day life and death in the Etruscan world can be aided by the use of information technology. It is nowadays possible, using data processing techniques, to condense into an image or three-dimensional model the results of years of fieldwork and study and thus make those results immediately accessible to the expert and layperson alike.

In the case of the ring-tombs at Macchiabuia and at the Casa delle Anfore, the use of Computer Aided Design (CAD) combined with "rendering" techniques, which allow the superposition of textures sampled from photographs of excavated finds onto three dimensional models of those finds, and with "ray tracing", which simulates the effect of light falling on the surfaces of an object it is possible to create a graphical reconstruction of structures and objects which encapsulate all of the information currently available through excavation.

In these particular cases, the plans of the sites, in vector format, were loaded into a 3D graphics program the walls were extended from the remaining bases, and a roof added. To this 3D model textures sampled from photographs of materials excavated on the site (wood, stone, beaten clay, terracotta, pottery etc.) were applied to surfaces. This enables the *renderer*, the part of the 3D graphics program which produces the screen image of the modelled
objects, to indicate not only the colours of the individual surfaces, but also their respective textures.

**Figure 27.** During a 3D model elaboration.

The resultant model may be used to model the dynamics of forces acting on structures, by applying constants for the densities of materials, acceleration due to gravity, and thus relative weights, from which the forces acting on the structure may be calculated, to ensure that the model is a valid representation in terms of engineering.

Just like a physical object the model can be rotated in any direction, viewed closer or further away, and from any angle, facilitating understanding of the object at any level, by any observer.

These kinds of models, combining graphic and other programs, can also be animated, and are highly suitable for the production of high resolution video, which can be used in museums for educational purposes, *online or in situ.*

*Duccio Calamandrei*
BIBLIOGRAPHY

D.Calamandrei et al., “Circoli con camera ipogea e calatoia a Marsiliana d’Albegna. Prime ipotesi di ricostruzione”, in Materiali per Populonia, c.s.
N.Humphrey, J.Kacorzyk, S.Pallecchi, E.Santoro, Life and Death of an Etruscan Settlement, in:
A.Minto, Marsiliana d’Albegna. Le scoperte archeologiche del principe don Tommaso Corsini, Firenze 1921.
A.Pecci et al., “Marsiliana d’Albegna: nuovi dati dall’area suburbana”, in Materiali per Populonia, c.s.
G.Pieragnoli et al., “Il Progetto Marsiliana d’Albegna: una presunta fornace etrusca di anfore da trasporto”, in A.Ciacci,


ACTIVITIES 2012

JANUARY: Workshop on the Post Excavation Handling of Data and Materials (15th–29th January, Policastro Bussentino, Campania);

MARCH: Workshop on the Post Excavation Handling of Data and Materials (5th–16th March, Marsiliana d’Albegna, Tuscany);

APRIL - MAY: Policastro Bussentino Project. Second International Archaeological Research Season (1th April–27th May, Policastro Bussentino, Campania);

JULY: The Etruscans at Marsiliana. Second International Introduction to Archaeology Fieldschool (1th–15th July, Marsiliana d’Albegna, Tuscany);

JULY: Processing of pottery and metal finds of the Etruscan Period. First International Introduction Course in Restoration (1th–15th July, Marsiliana d’Albegna, Tuscany);

JULY: Detecting Cultural Landscape in Mediterranean Archaeology, DeCLaMA 2012. (15th–22th July, Marsiliana d’Albegna, Tuscany);


The calendar is not definitive and some dates may change. Other activities are provided in summer. For more information and updates about individual courses and fields-school, look or write at:

www.etrurianova.org
info@etrurianova.org
The activities and projects of Etruria Nova can be seen on the website: [http://www.etrurianova.org](http://www.etrurianova.org)

Etruria Nova is on Facebook as: Etruria Nova e Progetto Marsiliana Archeologia

For details of forthcoming activities and applications:

Associazione Etruria Nova Onlus
Vicolo S. Agostino, 12
53024 Montalcino (SI)
tel. +39 (0)577 600917
cell. +39 349 3613406
info@etrurianova.org

Direct contact for staff members:

Aidan aidan@etrurianova.org
Duccio duccio@etrurianova.org
Elena elena@etrurianova.org
Lorella lorella@etrurianova.org
Sara sara@etrurianova.org
Silvia silvia@etrurianova.org
Sponsors of Marsiliana d’Albegna Project

Tenuta Marsiliana
Principi Corsini
loc. Castello- Marsiliana, GR

Strada del Vino e dei Sapori
Colli di Maremma
p.zza del Pretorio, 4
Scansano, GR
tel. 0564 507381

Frantoio Andreini
v. Provinciale Amiatina, 25/b - Magliano in Toscana, GR
tel. 0564 511067

Terra Sincera
Azienda Agricola
loc. Guinzoni, 262 - Marsiliana, GR
tel. 347 4063703

Caseificio Sociale di Manciano
Soc. Coop. Agricola
loc. Piano di Cirignano
Manciano, GR
tel. 0564 60941

La Toscana dei Sapori SNC
v. Scalabrelli, 16
Montiano, GR
tel. 0564 589339

AgrìMaremma
Soc. Coop. Agricola
loc. Banditella - Marsiliana, GR
tel. 0564 606415

La Selva
Azienda Bioagricola
loc. San Donato - Albinia, GR
tel. 0564 885799

Antica Fattoria La Parrina
loc. Parrina - Albinia, GR
tel. 0564 8626

La Speranza - Azienda Agricola
loc. Casale Nuovo - Marsiliana, GR
tel. 0564 814621

SMA Etruria
loc. Badesse - Monteriggioni, SI
tel. 0577 580111

La Bottega degli Agricoltori
loc. Fontazzi - Murlo, SI
tel. 0577 817588
The companies interested in sponsoring the Association ETRURIA NOVA and “Marsiliana d’Albenga Project”, are welcome to call or write us for a first acquaintance.