

ARHEOLOOGILISED
VÄLITÖÖD
EESTIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
FIELDWORK
IN ESTONIA

2007

Koostanud ja toimetanud
Ülle Tamla

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Uus 18, Tallinn 10111, Eesti
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Esikaas: 13.–14. sajandist pärit ribiline väike klaaspudel Tartu vanalinnast.

Cover: Fragment of a 13.-14 cc small glass bottle (Ribbenflasche) from Old Tartu.

Tagakaas: Tervena säilinud keskaegne nahkjalats Tartu vanalinnast.

Back cover: Well preserved leather shoe from Old Tartu.

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TARTU ÜLIKOOLI
RAAMATUKOGU
SUNDEKSEMPLAR

MAJOR RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWORK IN 2007

Ants KRAUT and Ülle TAMLA

National Heritage Board, Uus 18, 10111 Tallinn

Ants.Kraut@muinas.ee

Institute of History, University of Tallinn

Rüütli 6, 10130 Tallinn

Ulle.Tamla@ai.ee

The National Heritage Board and the Department of Cultural Heritage of the Tallinn City Government issued 122 licenses for archaeological studies in 2007 (Fig. 3). Depending on the objective of the applications, the licenses may be divided into research related excavations (Fig. 3: A), rescue excavations (Fig. 3: B), supervision activities (Fig. 3: C) and landscape surveys. In previous years the number of academic research excavations tended to reach the number of licenses issued for rescue excavations, this year rescue excavations and supervision work formed the largest part of archaeological field work. This was caused by large-scale installations of water and sewage lines, or their reconstruction in historic city centers that are listed as heritage conservation areas. From the point of view of heritage conservation it was positive that an increasing number of licenses were issued for excavations at heritage sites under restoration or reconstruction, e.g. churches or manor estates, where construction projects already included archaeological studies. A characteristic feature of the 2007 archaeological field work was public interest towards certain excavations and consequent research results. Regardless of the character or



Fig. 1. Trial excavation at the Harjumäe slope in Tallinn displayed supporting walls from the 17th–18th cent. that had not been indicated on the bastion plans of the time.



Fig. 2. Archaeologists and forensic experts documented and directed the exhumation of the remains of the Soviet soldiers buried at Tõnismägi, Tallinn.

scope of the research all archaeologists who received the license to excavate were obliged to submit a written report of their work to the National Heritage Board (see table, last row). The total number of archaeologists that received the license to excavate was 30. From those 7 excavated on a single object, the rest were engaged on up to a dozen sites.

RESEARCH RELATED EXCAVATIONS

Excavations related to various research aims were carried out by the teams of the Institute of History and Archaeology of the University of Tartu, Estonian History Museum, private companies OÜ Agu EMS and OÜ Tael. In addition to continuing work on previously studied sites (e.g. researching deeper layers), excavations were initiated also on monuments not yet excavated earlier. From the latter group, the hill-fort of Korneti 4 km from the border of Estonia in NE Latvia was a joint expedition between the archeologists of the University of Tartu and the University of Latvia. The license to research this monument was issued by the National Heritage Board of Latvia.

Two expeditions were carried out to research the early settlement history of the territory of Estonia. One of them concentrated on archaeological and geological studies of the territory between the rivers Narva and Luuga. Landscape surveys were carried out on both sides of the border, revealing several Stone Age sites, and a small trial pit was made in the VI settlement site of **Riigiküla** (no. 1). According to Aivar Kriiska who directed the excavations, it contained rich finds that refer to a settlement from the Narva culture. Considering the altitude of the Riigiküla VI settlement site and the character of the newly discovered finds A. Kriiska suggests that this might belong to one of the oldest settlement sites of the region. The site will be further excavated next year. The second expedition was carried out on the **Jägala** hill-fort and its vicinity (nos 2, 3). Earlier excavations on the southern side of the hill-fort dated it to the Neolithic period, but the 2007 excavations on the northern ridge did not record any traces of such an early settlement. An overview of the excavation results and their relation to previous research results of the hill-fort is described by Mari Lõhmus and Ester Oras in the present publication.

Expeditions directed by Heiki Valk, Head of the *Arheoloogia Kabinet*, University of Tartu continued studies on hill-forts in South-East Estonia. This time the formation and development of the hill-forts in **Luhtõ**, **Sangaste** and **Rosma** (nos 4–6) were studied. Previously there was little archaeological information about these sites. H. Valk writes in his article that all the hill-forts offered interesting and even

surprising outcomes. For example, the suggestion that Luhtõ hill-fort was in use only for a short period in the end of the Pre-Roman Iron Age; the construction of Sangaste hill-fort was probably interrupted, since the plateau was not leveled and there were no traces of defense constructions on the edges. Rosma hill-fort displays traces of two settlements from different periods. A carbon analysis of the defense structure of the later period gave a result that dated the hill-fort to a later period than expected, which does not support the current knowledge about the second half of the 13th and 14th century. The same subject was further pursued with excavations in Latvia on the hill-fort in Korneti and landscape surveys in its vicinity. **Korneti** hill-fort (*Korneti linnamägi* in Estonian, *Drusku* or *Korneti pilskalns* in Latvian) is situated in an area where during the turn of the 19th–20th centuries both Estonian and Latvia settlements existed side by side. The article by Heiki Valk and Antonija Vilcane explains that the primary objective was to determine the construction time of the hill-fort and check the current hypothesis that the hill-fort dates from the Late Iron Age. The latest research results confirm that the oldest traces of settlement at the Korneti hill-fort date from the Pre-Roman Iron Age. Carbon analyses also refer to settlements in the Migration Period, Pre-Viking and Viking Periods, any material from later periods is absent.

Excavations were continued on the **Siksali Kirikumägi** hill-fort (no. 7), directed by Heiki Valk, with the aim of determining the scope and age of the cremation burials discovered in the trench that was dug in 2003 to locate the old church site. The central part of the trench was widened and a 2–3 cm thick layer of burials was discovered at the depth of *ca.* 60 cm from the present ground level, on top of undisturbed natural topsoil. Burnt bones were discovered at a large area, where they lay in nests and also scattered in fragments. H. Valk is of the opinion that first a layer of soil was removed in a ritual act, then the burnt bones were scattered to the burial site and last the bones were covered with the soil that was first removed from the same site. The absence of finds did not allow to accurately date the layer of burials.

Students and post-graduate students of archaeology of the University of Tartu continued their field works at the **Viljandi ski-jumping hill** (no. 8). A new pit was made to the west side of the hill, reaching to the west and north sides of the steep bank. Similarly to several previous years a number of construction remains were unearthed, which according to Heiki Valk are connected to the besiege activities of the Viljandi hill-fort in the 13th century. An article by Heiki Valk and his assistants Maria Smirnova, Eve Rannamäe and Raido Roog describes the latest research results from the Viljandi ski-jumping hill.

Upon the initiative of the municipality and museum of Viljandi excavations were continued on the **Viljandi Kaevumägi** (no. 9). The preservation of parts of the walls of the Order Castle has been in progress for some time in order to turn them to an attractive sight. Works were carried out at the west wall of the northern building (so-called clergy building) of the outer hill-fort, at the east wing of the convent and at the chapel. Supplementary to cleaning and opening up the walls and documenting them, a small trial pit was made on the north-west side of the hill, with the hope to find traces of a cultural layer from the Late Iron Age. The present publication offers an overview of the major results of the 2007 excavations at Kaevumägi and describes the plans for the future in an article written by Riina Juurik, Anti Lillak and their supervisor Heiki Valk.

Previous excavations in **Uugla**, County of Läänemaa (nos 10–12) inspired Mati Mandel and Jüri Peets to continue archaeological research and landscape surveys of pre-historic iron smelting sites. The aim was to determine whether the dwelling of the smith who worked there in the 12th–13th centuries could be located at the site where the Uugla manor was erected in the 14th century, and whether the burial site of the smith's family could be the stone grave situated on the lands of the present Veskimäe estate. A pit was also made on the ruins of the iron smelting furnace to learn about the construction and working principles of the furnace. J. Peets discovered remains of an iron smelting furnace with an air channel. The construction of the furnace resembles an 11th century furnace that was excavated in Raatvere in 1980. Supplementary to excavations a number of surfs were made in Uugla. The results confirm that the County of Läänemaa was a major centre of iron production from the 11th century up to at least the 14th century. An overview of the latest discoveries of the Läänemaa pre-history is presented in an article by Mati Mandel. Excavations were continued also in **Käku** (no. 13), island of Saaremaa, directed by Jüri Peets to further study the ancient art of iron work. The ruins of a smithery together with a thick cultural layer have been of interest to the archaeologists for a long time. Finds from the excavation suggest that the smithery produced both iron and bronze items in the 14th century. The site requires further excavations next year.

Marika Mägi directed field work of the students and post-graduates of archaeology of the University of Tallinn in **Viltina**, **Kurevere**, **Sutu** and **Pällamõisa** (nos 14–18) in search of ancient landing sites and ports. The publication presents an overview of the excavations in 2006–2007 in Pällamõisa by Marika Mägi and her assistant Ragnar Nurk. Based on the excavation results and archival material the authors present a hypothesis that the main income of the Pällamõisa estate, founded in the second half of the 16th century, came from the mill, the sea and the river harbor.

Villu Kadakas directed field work in the **Jõhvi churchyard** (no. 19), that was a continuation to previous studies in 1999 and 2001. The aim of this year's excavations was to determine whether the church was surrounded by a wall in the Middle Ages. An overview of the activities in the Jõhvi churchyard and the results achieved is presented by Villu Kadakas and Ragnar Nurk, summarizing also all archaeological studies carried out by Agu EMS in 2007.



Fig. 4. The walls of a 16th cent. weigh-house were excavated and marked on the pavement of the Tallinn Town Hall Square. Photo: Erki Russow

An exception in the scheduled scientific excavations of the year 2007 was the study commissioned by the Tallinn city government and carried out by Tael Ltd at the **Tallinn Town Hall square** (no. 20). The general aim of the excavations was to determine and later signpost historic sites at the Town Hall square and to mark the former buildings at the square on the pavement. A pit was dug in a place where the so-called grand weigh-house, built in the mid-16th century and demolished in the 20th century, had stood. The methodology chosen for the studies was questioned and not approved by the expert council of archaeology; hence it was decided to limit the excavations to determining the location of the walls of the weigh-house and not excavate deeper layers.

RESCUE EXCAVATIONS

In 2007, the most intensive rescue operations were carried out in the protection zones of the old parts of **Tallinn**, **Tartu**, **Viljandi** and **Pärnu** (Fig. 3: B), where archaeological investigations were required to release protected areas for construction activities. One of the most unfortunate objects was the settlement site at **Riigiküla II** (no. 21), where the owner had caused considerable damage to the protected site by illegal construction and earthworks. Aivar Kriiska fixed the large-scale demolition and directed consequent rescue excavations. He noted that ca. 70 m of cultural layer had been removed from the river side of the settlement, tens of holes and a deep trench for fence posts and sewerage had been dug. The soil of the disturbed area was sieved, trial surfs and a couple of small-scale excavations were made in the area. The rescue excavations resulted in the

total of over a thousand Stone Age finds and animal bones. The finds include various types of pottery (Narva type, typical comb-marked pottery, later comb-marked pottery and corded-wire pottery) that suggest that the site was settled from *ca.* 5000–1900 BC. Aivar Kriiska is of the opinion that at first the site might have been a coast that connected the sea and the lagoon or even two consecutive lagoons that later remained on the bank of the River Narva.

An entirely different behavior was characteristic to a land owner in **Sargvere** (no. 22), County of Järvamaa, where in the course of planning a new dwelling area the owner informed the heritage inspector of accidentally discovered finds and stopped all construction activities. Inspection of the site confirmed that it was a pre-historic settlement site that required national protection. In order to continue the planned construction work, it was necessary to quickly organize rescue excavations. The discoveries of the rescue excavations are described in the article by Andres Tvauri in the present publication, one of the most significant finds being the basement of a 16th century hut. Another article is connected with the excavations in Sargvere, where two numismatics – Ivar Leimus and Mauri Kiudsoo, describe the hoards discovered in Estonia in 2007. These include also a small hoard of coins, the dating of the coins confirmed the dating of the hut.

Interesting archaeological finds are often discovered in the course of road constructions or renovations. For example, during the reconstruction of the Rakvere – Rannapungerja road in **Tudulinna** (no. 23) unexpectedly human bones were unearthed. Archaeologists were summoned to fix the find and determine the age of the bones. The article by Andres Tvauri explains that the bones originated from a 15th century burial site of a Votic population. A similar reason called for rescue excavations in the **Uueveski** housing area in Viljandi (no. 24). Excavations were directed by Helena Kaldre, who confirmed that the human bones accidentally unearthed in the course of construction activities date from the 17th century plague grave. The dating was based on the metal ornaments and two 16th–17th century coins characteristic to the period that were found in the graves. Both the Tudulinna and the Viljandi Uueveski burial sites were excavated only in the construction zone and will remain under heritage protection.

Similarly to previous years most of the rescue excavations in 2007 were conducted in historic town centers and suburbs. The most time- and work consuming research was made on the Vabaduse Square in **Tallinn** (nos. 25 – 43) and on the Ingeri bastion in the vicinity. Excavations connected with the renovation of the Vabaduse Square and the construction of an underground car park and Monument to the War of Independence will be continued in 2008; excavations

directed by Peeter Talvar near the tower Kiek-in-de-Kök were completed shortly before winter. Entrance to underground defense structures will in future be from near the tower.

The only underwater rescue excavations in 2007 were done in Tallinn in connection with the renovation and dredging of a port (no. 41). Unexpectedly a ship wreck was discovered in the course of the works. Kristin Ilves describes the underwater studies of the wreck, how the remains of the wreck were uplifted and what problems all these activities brought along. Some of the author's positions arose contradictory opinions in the reviewers Maili Roio, underwater archaeologist of the National Heritage Board, Vello Mäss, researcher of the Maritime Museum and Friedrich Lüth, Director General of the Roman-Germanic Commission of the Institute of Archaeology of Germany and the editors of the present publications decided to publish also their viewpoints.

Rescue excavations at **Ülikooli 14** in **Tartu** (no. 44) that had continued for three years were concluded. The research offered several interesting discoveries according to Peeter Piirits who directed the excavations, but also presented a number of challenges. In 2006 the unfortunate fate of a 10th century silver hoard discovered at the slope of the pre-historic Tartu hill-fort was discussed, this year the age of the excavated walls and possible ways of preservation caused acute debates. In 2007 excavations were concluded also at **Ülikooli 15** (no. 45), where the ancient cesspits included a large amount of rare finds, among others also organic material. These finds and other archaeological discoveries at Ülikooli 15 are described by Andres Tvauri in his article with rich illustrations. The same article touches upon monitoring work at the courtyard of the main building of the University of Tartu.

Several small-scale rescue excavations and supervision work were undertaken in 2007 in connection with development and renovation works in the historic town centers of **Pärnu** (nos 53–65), **Viljandi** (nos 66–74) and **Haapsalu** (nos 76–80). The present publication describes excavations in Haapsalu, directed by Anton Pärn and Erki



Fig. 5. Tartu. View on the excavated walls at Ülikooli Street 14.

Russow, and in Viljandi, directed by Andres Tvauri, Aivar Kriiska and Rivo Bernotas. Excavations conditioned by the replacement of the floor in the **Paide church** (no. 118) are described in the article by Villu Kadakas and Ragnar Nurk that summarizes the work of OÜ Agu-EMS.

SUPERVISION

Most of the supervision work of 2007 was conditioned by the installation of water pipes, sewage and lighting to heritage protected areas. In such cases the archaeologists are charged with determining the possible existence of a cultural layer, documenting various strata, diggings and building constructions, collecting and determining the finds unearthed in the course of the excavations. The present publication introduces the results of the major supervision works in **Tõdva**, County of Harjumaa (no. 106), done by Mauri Kiudsoo, in the Order castle in **Karksi** (no. 109) in the County of Viljandimaa, done by Heiki Valk and Martin Malve and also in the heritage protection area of **Vana-Pärnu** (Old Pärnu) (no. 54), done by Ülle Tamla, Priit Läti, Irita Kallis and Ingrid Õunapuu.

LANDSCAPE SURVEYS AND STRAY FINDS

Landscape surveys conducted in different parts of Estonia discovered 79 new archaeological objects, most of them settlement sites. The new discoveries and their distribution map are included in the overview written by Marge Konsa and Mirja Otsa. In 2007 a couple of hundred stray finds were brought to the department of Archaeology of the University of Tartu and to the Institute of History of the University of Tallinn. The oldest of the finds date from the Stone Age, the youngest from the 17th-18th centuries. Also hoards may be classified as stray finds, Mauri Kiudsoo and Ivar Leimus concentrate on the hoards discovered in 2007 in their joint article.



Fig. 6. A silver hoard from the time of the Nordic War was discovered in Kaarma, island of Saaremaa.