

Time Detectives at Bancroft Roman Villa

Why is the site at Bancroft so special?

Bancroft is a special site in Milton Keynes because it has the remains of a Roman villa! The villa was an expensive country house with mosaics (pictures made of small tiles) on the floor and frescos (paintings on the walls). One of the frescos showed a fish scene. The villa also has a bath suite with lots of rooms, including a steam room and a cold plunge pool. In front of the villa was a rectangular fish pond. The Park Trust looks after the site that shows the outline of the villa in stone.

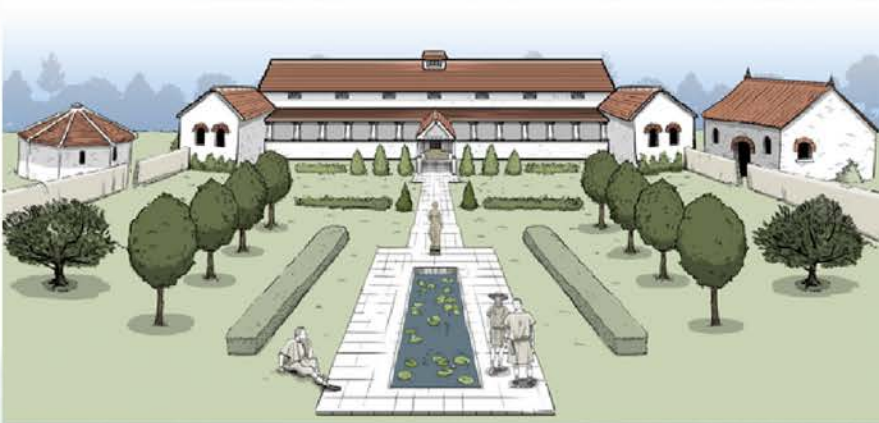


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The villa was built during the Roman period. The Romans invaded in 43 CE and ruled until around 400 CE. The Roman soldiers did not live in the villa but lived in army camps nearby, at Towcester and near Fenny Stratford. The villa would have been owned by a rich local who traded or cooperated with the Romans. The building you can see on site was built in 340 CE.

1a. What is a villa? A villa is.....

1b. What rooms were in the bath suite? There was a and a in the bath suite

1c. When was the villa built? The villa was built in.....

2. Below are images of what was found by archaeologists on site. Using the information from the text above, match up the words to the pictures.

Mosaic Fresco Fish Pond



Did you know that c) can be seen outside the toilets at centre:mk (the shopping centre in Milton Keynes)? Have a look next time you're there

Why did they build a villa at Bancroft?

3. Look at the images below. Discuss why each of these would have helped people to live at Bancroft.



By Loughton Brook



Near Watling Street - an important Roman Road



Near Roman Army Camps



On High ground

What was the history of the villa?

4. Can you put the events below in chronological order (order in time) to show how the villa changed?

a) 1st Roman villa built - it was a three room building, and was used as a farm	b) Bath suite extended to what is now seen on site	c) Romans leave Briton. Plague, war and lack of money hit the area. Villa abandoned
d) 2nd Roman villa built	e) 1st villa burnt down	f) Romans invade Briton

Extension activities

- Imagine you owned the villa and were trying to convince a friend to come and stay. Write a letter to them about the villa using the picture and any other information you think would be useful.
- Research Watling Street to find out why it was so important during the Roman period.
- To find out more about the villa, visit: www.theparkstrust.com/heritage. You can see some of the finds discovered at Bancroft at Milton Keynes Museum.