



Mill Hill Park  
Residents'  
Association  
Acton

## Ancient Roman Bowl Found in Mill Hill Park

In 1981, excavations were carried out in Avenue Gardens, in the front garden of where number 51 Avenue Gardens was later built, and an almost complete, very finely decorated Roman bowl, dating from between 100 and 125 AD, was discovered – by far the most exciting archaeological ‘find’ ever made in the Mill Hill Park area.

It’s a fairly small but splendid object, in shiny red pottery (known as Samian ware or ‘terra sigillata’) with fascinating designs on it, depicting: the god Jupiter, seated and holding a thunderbolt; a lion being ridden or teased by a small ‘cupid’; and a figure of Victory wearing voluminous drapery and holding a wreath. Experts can tell that it was imported from Gaul (France), and was made at a place now called Les-Martres-de-Veyre in central France. As some of the other pottery made there at the same time, and in exactly the same style, is actually signed by the potter - they even know his name: Donnaucus.



After almost 40 years at the Museum of London, where it was only occasionally displayed, it is now on view at Gunnersbury Park Museum (on loan from the Museum of London), in the ‘People and Place’ Gallery on the ground floor. We are fortunate that this wonderful Roman artefact can now be seen and admired, free of charge, within walking distance of the very site where it was dug up, and where it once graced the home of a local resident, nearly 2,000 years ago.