



2016 FIELD SEASON

ORIENTATION PACK FOR VOLUNTEERS

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The 2016 season is the sixteenth year of our collaboration with the National Museum in Tbilisi.

Archaeological work in Nokalakevi began with a joint German-Georgian expedition under the leadership of Alfons Maria Schneider in November 1930. Over four months, they planned and sampled the settlement by excavating 30 small trenches in different areas throughout the site.

In 1973, a team from the S. Janashia Museum in Tbilisi (now part of the Georgian National Museum) began large-scale excavations at Nokalakevi under the leadership of Parmen Zakaraia. Over 17 years, houses were relocated from within the walls and the site was cleared of vegetation before the excavation and restoration of the standing and buried remains could begin. This significant achievement was made possible by extensive funding from the Georgian SSR and is the reason that the site survives as well as it does today. However, the focus on excavation and conservation of stone structures meant that in many areas of the site, particularly those where standing masonry was absent, very little archaeological investigation of older deposits was undertaken. Those deeper excavations that were undertaken, predominantly by Professor Lomitashvili in the 1990s, indicated that the origins of the site lay in the later Bronze Age.

The idea of an Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi was first raised in private discussions between Ian Colvin and Prof. Davit Lomitashvili in 1999. In 2000 the British and Georgian directors of the expedition travelled to the site to discuss research agendas and details of strategy for the proposed archaeological excavation and post-excavation work. The following year the first small team of British archaeologists and students travelled to Nokalakevi to work with Georgian colleagues, and the collaboration has grown with each subsequent season. It is now the longest running international project in west Georgia.





CORE STAFF

Georgia:

- Dr Nikoloz Murgulia: Head of Nokalakevi Expedition, Georgian National Museum
- Prof Davit Lomitashvili: Deputy Director of the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia; Pottery specialist
- Dr Besik Lortkipanadze: Historian, curriculum instructor for the Ministry Of Education.
- Dr Nino Kebuladze: Metallurgy specialist and conservator, Georgian National Museum.
- Ana Tvaradze, Nokalakevi Site Supervisor; Georgian National Museum

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The Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi (AGEN) welcomes adult volunteers of all ages, who are interested in working on a fascinating archaeological site. Many of our volunteers are undergraduate university students studying archaeology and related disciplines. However, prior experience of archaeology and/or professional ambitions are by no means requirements; we take fit volunteers of all ages, including those with no archaeological background, motivated by no more than interest and a desire to experience archaeological research at first-hand.

AGEN is a 'not for profit' organisation, staffed by volunteers who give their time for free. The British directors work closely with Georgian colleagues based at the National Museum in Tbilisi to organise and help fund the ongoing, annual fieldwork at the site and related pre- and post-excavation work.

AGEN provides travel, food and accommodation for volunteers during their time on expedition, with the British directors responsible for administering the international element of the annual fieldwork at Nokalakevi. Including flights, it costs us £1500 a head to run the expedition. We ask our volunteers to raise an equivalent amount of funds in donations for AGEN.

We encourage all volunteers to explore what avenues are available to them for raising some or the entire donation through grants; depending on your situation we may be able to provide advice.

Other details

Project dates are 1st July – 1st August 2016 (dates to be confirmed, subject to flight availability). Flights will be organised for all UK participants including those from other countries who wish to fly via London. The group will be met at Tbilisi airport and driven to Nokalakevi by minibus. This last leg of the journey takes five or six hours allowing for rest stops.



What to expect

Participants receive a programme of training in all aspects of the work. This is likely to include excavation, recording, planning and level taking, survey, washing and recording artefacts, ceramic analysis and possibly some immediate restoration and conservation. Volunteers are offered a site tour and excursions are arranged for rest days to other sites in west Georgia and the Black Sea coast. Working hours, subject to change on particularly hot days, are:

6:30am = first breakfast

7:00am - 10:30am = excavation

10:30am - 11:00am = second breakfast

11:00am - 2:00pm = excavation

2:00pm - 3:00pm = finds washing

3:00pm = Lunch

4:00pm - 8:00pm = rest\finds and archive processing

8:00pm = dinner

The facilities

The local infrastructure has much improved since the beginning of the Anglo-Georgian Expedition, though it is still basic by western standards. Nokalakevi has an adequate electricity supply though one should not be surprised at power cuts. The supply can be very poor with a low voltage, so charging electrical equipment is slow and may have undesirable effects on batteries and equipment.

Accommodation

Volunteers live a few minutes' walk away from site with host families in the village, sharing their facilities. Our host families are kind and very hospitable. Squat toilets may be a novelty for some of our volunteers, but are not as frightening as some suppose. Water comes from a well. Our meals are taken communally at the Expedition dig house, which is located on site.

Washing

Your hosts will rely on well water to supply showers etc, so water conservation is an important consideration. The dig house has a water tower, which stores river water for washing and squat toilets. However, the River Tekhuri is a few metres away from the dig house and is excellent for swimming, washing yourself and your clothes. Except when it rains in the mountains, the river runs crystal clear over a bed of gravel and stone, warmed slightly by a sulphur spring around half a mile upstream. It provides welcome relief from the heat and humidity after a hard day's work!

Food and drink

The local food is excellent, consisting of a varied and healthy balance of meat, vegetables and fruits, the majority of which is produced locally. We can accommodate vegetarians and other dietary requirements, but it is important that you discuss these issues with a director before enrolling. Our water is drawn from a local well and in good conditions comes up pure and cold, but Georgia is well known for its mineral waters if you prefer to drink bottled water.



This is not an exhaustive list. It is intended to help you decide what you need to bring or leave at home, and to make you aware of certain important factors to bear in mind while making your decisions. If you have any questions on packing or anything else to do with the expedition do please contact one of the directors.

Security:

Georgians have a deserved reputation for being friendly and hospitable but, as with all travel, robbery is a concern and, although there is increasing prosperity in Georgia, rural areas remain exceedingly poor. Your Georgian hosts and the British staff will do their best to ensure your security, but you can and should help by remembering the following:

- Never wander off by yourself. Always ensure someone in the expedition knows where you are.
- Don't carry any valuables/ expensive personal devices unless you absolutely have to. Those that you do should be well concealed. Never leave them lying around.

Money and Documents:

US\$100-\$200 will be more than enough cash for private purchases which may include souvenirs, snacks, beer, telephone calls, gifts, etc. In smaller denominations GB pounds and US dollars are readily exchangeable (though Georgian bank tellers have been known to refuse to accept bills that are not clean and free from tears and markings). **Do not bring travellers cheques. They are extremely difficult to cash in Georgia.** Because it is necessary to carry some personal cash, it might be worth bringing a money belt or concealed wallet. Distributing money you are carrying in different places about your person is advisable. As well as the originals you should bring a photocopy of the personal details page of your passport, and visa if relevant. Keep these in a different part of your luggage to the originals in case of loss.

Dress and Churches:

When visiting churches clothes should be clean. Men should wear trousers and women should wear a skirt or dress (of a respectable length) and have their shoulders covered. In more rural locations, women wear headscarves into church. If in doubt seek advice from our Georgian colleagues or one of the British directors.

Gifts:

Georgians are an open-handed people. You may find yourself overwhelmed by the kindnesses of strangers, and the families you stay with will go out of their way to ensure your comfort. It is a good idea to bring some small gifts with you that you can give in return, and souvenirs from your hometown (for example, tea towels, mugs, postcards etc) have a nice personal value. Sweets are popular and easy to carry and offer, especially for children. The expedition housekeepers work extremely hard to prepare food for everyone and in return are receptive to anything that will make their jobs easier, even if it's just your help and attention. Card games are always popular and board games can be too. It is hard to be prescriptive as the best gift is a personal one and not always a physical object. In the past people have bought musical instruments to play, knowing that Georgians enjoy singing.

You will be expected to have this kit with you on site every day and will not be allowed to work on site unless you are wearing sturdy boots!

Archaeology Equipment

- 3½ - 4 inch pointing trowel (WHS trowels are available in most hardware shops and online (e.g. www.pasthorizonstools.com).
- 3m or 5m hand-tape
- Line Level
- 6H pencils (HB are not suitable for archaeological drawing)
- Eraser and a good pencil sharpener or knife
- Black biro
- You may also wish to bring gloves and a kneeling pad

On site

Personal

Clothing:

- Clothes to work in on site which you don't mind getting muddy or ripped
- Sun hat (everyone will wear hats when working)
- Waterproof clothing you can work in, particularly a lightweight rain coat (west Georgia can have quite a lot of rain as well as warm sun).
- Tough boots
- Bedclothes: sheets or sleeping bag, large pillowcase and a micro fleece blanket for occasionally cold nights.
- Clothes for excursions and evening time
- Jumper/fleece for cool evenings or high mountains
- Swimsuit and towel, flip-flops or sandals to wade in a river with

Through the nature of archaeology and the climate of Georgia, there may be times when you have minor cuts and blisters. Insect bites are common. During the course of your stay, you may suffer with an upset stomach.

Medical

- Month's supply of any medication you require and prescription details
- Personal medical kit. These can be bought from travel shops or personally assembled. You will probably want bandages, sticking plaster, antiseptic cream, painkillers, antihistamine, rehydration powders (eg Dioralyte) etc.
- Note it is forbidden for expedition leaders to provide any other medication to volunteers.

Your branded products may be difficult to buy in the area of Georgia we are located, though it is possible there will be unfamiliar alternatives (Ask if you're not sure)

Toiletry / Grooming

- travel tissues, emergency toilet paper
- your preferred feminine hygiene products
- Your glasses prescription in case they break
- Month's supply of contact lenses and solutions
- hairbrush, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo

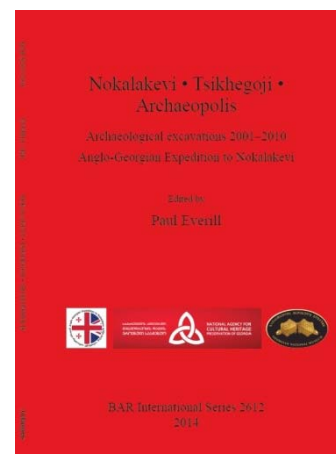
Other kit / Paraphernalia

- Sunscreen with a high protection factor and/or sun-block
- Mosquito repellent
- Water bottle
- Pocket knife (not in your hand luggage)
- Torch (crucial for finding your way home (and the toilet!) at night)
- Notebook or journal
- A good book to read



The results of the excavations from 2001 to 2010 were fully reported in our 2014 monograph and we recommend that volunteers read this to familiarise themselves with the archaeological work at Nokalakevi.

Everill, P. (ed) 2014. *Nokalakevi Tsikhegoji Archaeopolis: Archaeological excavations 2001-10. Anglo-Georgian Expedition to Nokalakevi*. BAR International Series 2612. Oxford, Archaeopress.



Trench A was first opened on the 18th July 2001 and originally measured 9m x 10m, including an area to its southeast that had previously been opened along the inner wall in 1995. It was extended to its current size of 13m east-west x 13.5m north-south in 2004. Its southwest corner is located at 269050.35 E/ 4693255.22 N (WGS84 UTM Zone 38N). The trench is orientated parallel to the fortification walls and consequently lies NNW-SSE, with the northeast corner located at 269058.18 E/ 4693271.10 N. It is situated about 5m to the north of the main, eastern, gate, and immediately to the west of the 6th century AD steps and their associated foundations. Trench A has thus far provided a complete sequence through the various occupation, abandonment and colluvial deposits in this part of the eastern lower town of Nokalakevi. These included the construction, maintenance and abandonment phases of the fortifications in the Byzantine period, and the evidence of Early Antique and Hellenistic settlement and subsequent necropolis. Since 2010 the Expedition has been revealing deposits from the 8th, 7th and 6th centuries BC, and in 2016 we are expecting up to a metre of further deposits to extend the sequence into the late Bronze Age/ early Iron Age.

Trench B was first opened on the 21st August 2002 and originally measured 7.5m x 7.5m. It was extended to its final size of 7.5m east-west x 20m north-south in 2003. Its southwest corner is located at 268973.14 E/ 4693271.18 N (WGS84 UTM Zone 38N). The trench was orientated fractionally off a true north-south alignment, with the northeast corner located at 268978.69 E/ 4693292.64 N. It was situated 30 metres to the north east of the Forty Martyrs Church, which was first constructed in the 6th century AD and still serves as the parish church for the village of Nokalakevi. Elements of the ecclesiastical boundary wall survive above ground to the south and west of the trench, along with a small square building with arches and a vaulted ceiling ten metres to the south. This would historically have served as an entrance to the precinct, and is used as a makeshift bell tower by the current church authorities. Trench B was located on the northern edge of the 'lower town' of historic Nokalakevi, where flatter ground gives way to the steep hillside to the north. Trench B was completed in 2014 however it is possible to characterise the two areas of particular interest, both sealed by significant colluvial deposits, as follows:

1. a predominantly Christian cemetery, first established in the early Byzantine period (about the 5th/6th century AD), in the southwest corner of the trench defined by a crude wall. This wall measures between 0.8m and 0.92m wide, with a maximum surviving height of 1m. It was

constructed from a mixture of riverstone; large, natural limestone boulders; and small, dressed limestone blocks, possibly robbed from the first two phases of fortification wall (4th – 5th century AD). Thirty five burials were excavated from the cemetery between 2002 and 2010.

2. a Hellenistic period clay and timber structure and associated deposits located towards the north of the trench.

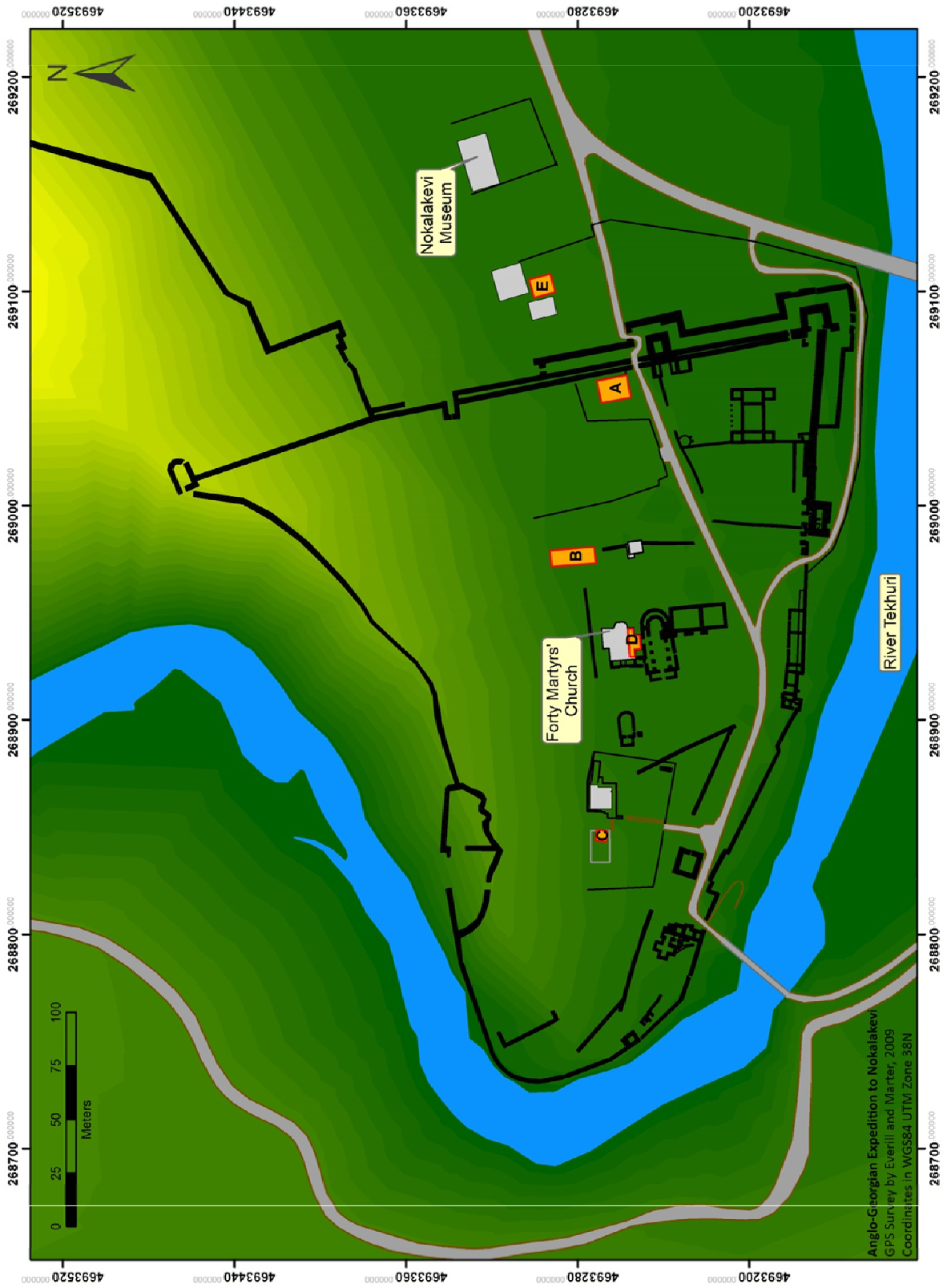
Trench C was first opened on the 3rd July 2014 and measured 5m x 5m. Its southwest corner is located at 268843.21 E/ 4693266.72 N (WGS84 UTM Zone 38N). The trench was orientated fractionally off a true north-south alignment, with the northeast corner located at 268848.80 E/ 4693271.08 N. It was situated 9.5 metres to the west of the current Dig House, which was first constructed around 1977. The trench was located on the southeast corner of the former village hospital. The hospital is thought to have been built towards the end of the 19th century, or early in the 20th century, and appears in photographs taken by D. Gozalishvili during the 1930-31 expedition. When the S. Janashia Museum Expedition to Nokalakevi was first established in 1973, it initially operated from a building on the south side of the Tekhuri, but a few years later (perhaps 1975 or 1976) it was given the old hospital to use – presumably after medical facilities had been centralised at Senaki. From the mid-1970s to 1991 this building served as a ‘Dig House’, accommodating supervisors and students, before being damaged beyond repair during the civil unrest of the 1990s. It was demolished in 2000/2001. Part of the reason for opening Trench C at this location stemmed from an interest in the material remains of the previous expedition; however the main driver was the fact that it was in a part of the site not previously excavated towards the western end of the lower town – some 124 metres west of Trench B, and 200 metres from Trench A and the eastern fortifications. The nearest previous excavation was at the small rectangular ‘tower’ of the Dadiani period (17th-early 19th century AD) 35 metres to the south. Trench C was completed in 2015, having revealed Hellenistic structures sealed by colluvial material.

Trench D in fact consisted of two foci (the south nave and the south porch of the Forty Martyrs’ Church) which were unified into one area of investigation during an excavation in 2014. Concurrent with the excavation inside the church, an examination of the Dadiani family crypt against the external north wall was also undertaken to assess condition. The archaeological work within the church was primarily intended to evaluate the survival of evidence relating to the Church’s dedication to the Forty Martyrs. Archaeological work in and around the Forty Martyrs’ Church took place from 25th August to the 12th September 2014. This followed a request from Bishop Shio (Mujiri) of the Senaki and Chkhorotsku Diocese of the Patriarchate of Georgia for the investigation of certain elements of the site, and the work was undertaken by a small team after the main field season had been completed. The work was funded by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

Trench E was opened in June 2015, and is located to the east of the main Byzantine fortifications. Early results indicate a previously unknown medieval fortification, apparently built on top of a much earlier defensive ditch. Work will continue here in 2016.

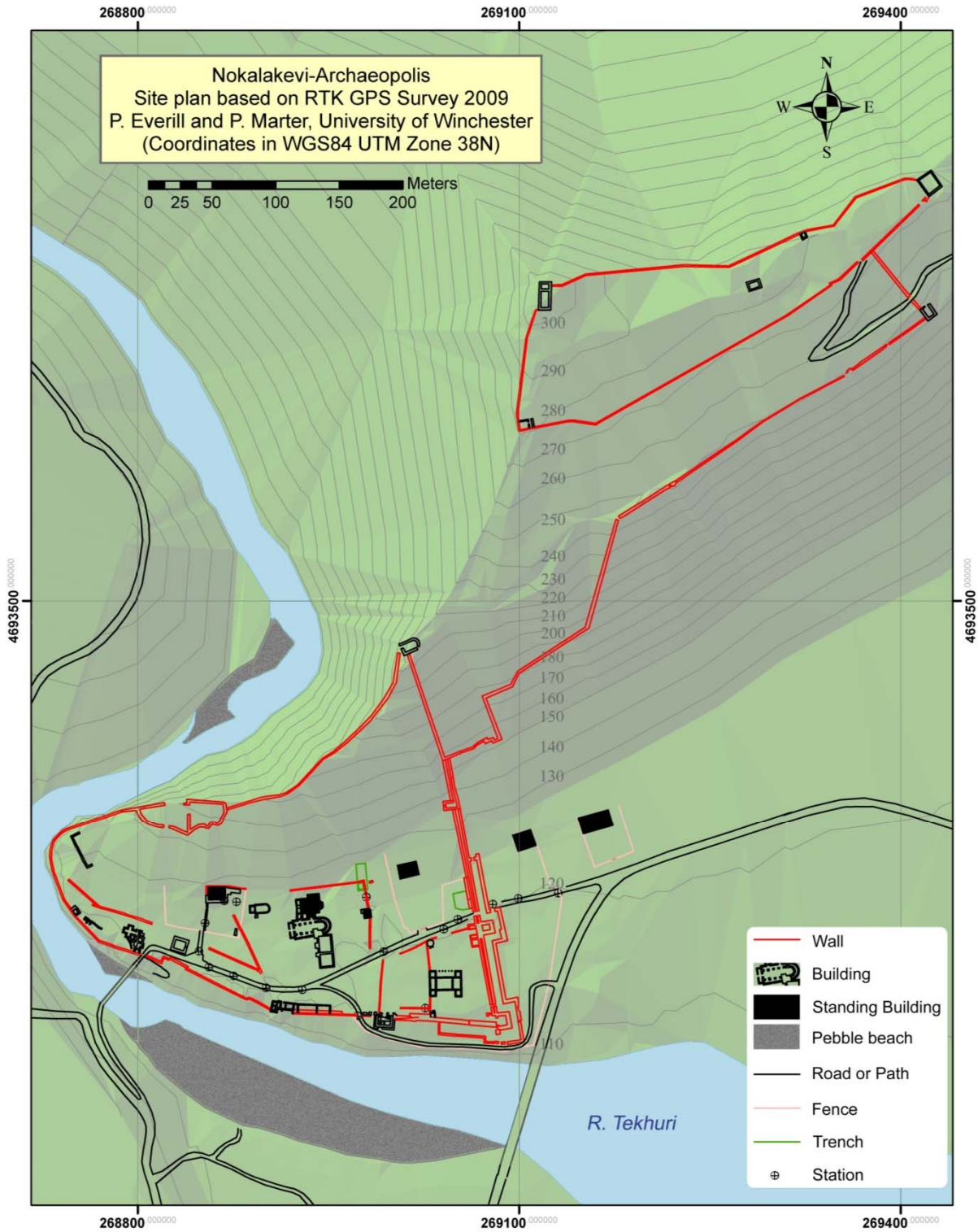
Trench F should be opened in 2016, and will be located across the top of the previous Trench B. It is intended to investigate the extent of the Hellenistic structure observed at the north of this trench.

In addition to work at Nokalakevi we plan to continue work at the nearby site of **Khuntsistsikhe**, where we are investigating the presence of fortifications of apparently a similar date to the main works at Nokalakevi. We hope that this might provide evidence of the ‘lost’ citadel of Onogurisis and thus answer one of the area’s most enduring archaeological mysteries. This work is likely to take place outside of the main field season; however in the event that it overlaps there may be opportunities to participate.





Date	Period	Detail	Nokalakevi
pre-8 th century BC	Late Bronze/early Iron Age	'Qulha' mentioned in Urartian sources: including West Georgia & Tao-Klarjeti.	1 st 'heroic' age ca. 12 th c. BC: Jason & the Argonauts' mythical quest for the Golden Fleece in Colchis; Aetes, Medea & the city of Aea captured the imagination of later Greeks & Georgians.
8 th -7 th centuries BC	Pre-antique (end of early Iron Age)	Cimmerian and Scythian invasions of East & West Georgia destroy central authority.	Double-headed animal figurines; ritual hearths/squares; bead & metal workshops. First large scale ceramic finds—all produced locally.
6 th -4 th centuries BC	Early Antique	Settlement of Ionian Greeks on East Black Sea coast. Kingdom of Colchis mentioned by Greek geographer pseudo-Scylax.	First imports of amphorae, black slip ceramics, jewellery and glass, from Attica, Ionia and Aegean. Local ceramics strongly represented in finds.
3 rd -1 st centuries BC	Hellenistic	Begins with Alexander the Great's semi-legendary contemporaries Parnavaz & Kuji last third of 4 th century BC; ends with the Mithridatic wars, Pompey's invasion of the Caucasus 67/66 BC, and the subsequent Roman settlement of the East.	Continued imports and new styles of local production. Clay & timber buildings; furnished pot burials, cremations & inhumations. Kuji founds Tsikhegoji (Nokalakevi). 2 nd Georgian 'heroic' age. Medieval Kartlian sources describe a legendary 'liberation' of Georgia from Alexander's Greeks & the unification of East & West Georgia under King Parnavaz & the West Georgian Eristavi (ruler) Kuji.
1 st c. BC – 3 rd c. AD	Roman	Pompey the Great's invasion through to Diocletian (284-305AD)/ Constantine (308-337) & the conversion of the Caucasus & Roman worlds to Christianity.	Largely absent from Nokalakevi; in West Georgia as a whole the vast majority of finds come from the coastal regions or the Kartli-Iberian borders. Literary sources (Arrian) describe four kingdoms in West Georgia: Lazika, Apsilia, Agasgia & Saniges.
4 th -8 th centuries AD	Byzantine	From Constantine the Great & Christianity to the first Arab invasions of West Georgia 735-7 AD (Murwan ibn Muhammad).	Majority of the visible standing architecture is dated to 4 th -6 th cc. AD. Byzantine literary sources describe Byzantine-Sasanian wars in unified Lazika-Egrisi in the 6 th century. Later Georgian sources' interest in a 3 rd 'heroic' age of 'unification' under Vakhtang Gorgasali.
8 th -10 th centuries AD	Abkhazian kingdom	From latter part of 8 th century AD to Bagrat III's unification of Georgia in 978.	Very few finds in Nokalakevi from 6 th century until 16 th century.
10 th -15 th centuries AD	Bagratid period	From Bagrat III's unification of Georgia in 978 until the breakup of this kingdom in second half of 15 th century.	Possible 11 th century additions to 40 Martyrs Church.
15 th -19 th centuries AD	Mingrelian principality	From the breakup of the first Georgian kingdom until Russia's protectorate of the Georgian principalities at the early 19 th century.	A branch of the princely Dadiani family lived at Nokalakevi, constructed folly & church bell tower; repaired 'palace' and some earlier walls and towers. Work typified by mixed use of robbed stone from earlier walls and river cobbles.
19 th century to 1973	Modern	From Russian annexation to the beginning of modern large-scale archaeological work.	Dubois du Montpéroux suggests (1833/9) that Nokalakevi may be Aetes' 12 th c. BC Aea and the Archaeopolis of the 6 th c. AD Byzantine sources. Growing interest leads to 1930-1 expedition under Schneider & eventually to modern excavations, 1973-today.





FINDS POLICY

Finds other than metalwork are placed in a plastic bag. Write the site code, trench code, context number (in brackets) and find type clearly on the bag with a marker pen - e.g. NOK03/A (035) pt. Different find types should be placed in separate bags and, in the case of bone, small holes made in the bag to allow it to breathe. Special finds are bagged, labelled and assigned a number from the Small Find register with a description, level and coordinate. Finds must never be left in unmarked bags. All bagged finds are moved to the base at the end of each day.

Human Bone (Hbn)

All the major elements of a skeleton are bagged separately on site and taken to the storeroom where they will be cleaned and measured. At the end of the season each skeleton will be taken to the Museum in Tbilisi, where it will be stored for future analysis.

Animal Bone (Abn)

Worked animal bone is a special find. All other pieces of bone of useful diagnostic size are kept for cleaning, weighing, and recording.

Ceramic Building Material (cbm)

Interesting, decorated and diagnostic pieces will be retained in separate bags. Otherwise CBM will be gathered for weighing, and a note of the quantities, types and date made on the context sheets.

Stone (st)

Interesting, decorated and diagnostic pieces are retained. Otherwise building debris and other inclusions are recorded as part of fill description and discarded.

Pottery (pt)

All shards larger than a 2p piece are gathered in bags for washing and weighing. Shards with ornamentation or with a glaze or slip decoration are kept, as are pieces of rim, handle or base. Matching shards from a single vessel will be bagged and numbered as a special find.

Metalwork (fe, cu, ag, au, or cu alloy)

All metalwork will be kept and placed in a carefully labelled paper bag for conservation.

Glass (gl)

Glass, especially coloured, decorated pieces, or pieces of rim, handle or base, should immediately be placed in a sealed plastic bag with a small amount of water in it.



Immunisations and Health

Students and volunteers are expected to organise their immunisations well in advance of the Expedition, as some require several weeks before a potential exposure.

You should follow the medical advice of your GP or travel clinic regarding which vaccinations are necessary and be prepared to mention that Nokalakevi is a rural village. Water is pumped and drawn from wells and filtered as a precaution; nearly all food is produced locally.

Ideally, you should be up to date on the following: Diphtheria (*higher risk in close contact with the local population*) Hepatitis A (*higher risk for long stay travellers, and those visiting areas of poorer sanitation*), Hepatitis B (*high endemicity: 8% population are carriers*), Polio, Tetanus, and Typhoid (*low risk*). In addition, please seek advice on Rabies (*low risk*), Tuberculosis (*low risk*) and Malaria (*very low risk*).

Mosquito nets and insect repellents are strongly advised as well as antihistamine cream or tablets, (some insects have a nasty bite that can become infected through scratching). A good level of personal hygiene is highly recommended as most health risks are avoidable through this manner. The high humidity doesn't allow for easy evaporation of sweat, which in turn collects dirt through the nature of our work and environment; personal care with cuts and scratches must be taken seriously.

You must bring your own sterile medical pack as mentioned in the 'things to bring' section. Have a look at the expedition website for relevant links.

Our expectations – important considerations

Our expedition works closely with Georgian colleagues, volunteers and the local community. We have a noticeable impact on the local community, which needs to be a positive one. We employ local workmen and housekeepers and through our combined work, we help to raise the importance of Nokalakevi as a historically and archaeologically valuable town. Your actions and behaviour have consequences in relation to this.

You are well-looked after while on the Anglo-Georgian Expedition. It is, however, important that all expedition participants take responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of those around them. It is essential that you observe any instructions regarding your general safety.

It is also important to remember that we are guests of the Georgians and each of us has a duty to maintain high standards of conduct, personal and professional, while we are on expedition. We expect from you a level of responsibility, common sense and maturity of actions that will command the respect of your Georgian hosts and supervisors.

As you will discover, alcohol plays a very specific role in Georgian culture. Please treat it with respect; avoid the village vodkas in particular and ensure that you do not embarrass yourself and others, including your hosts, by drunken conduct.

We reserve the right to send home early any participant whose behaviour has had, or is thought likely to have, a negative effect on themselves or the expedition.

That said, we want you to enjoy and interact fully with the unique environment Georgia and Nokalakevi provide.



ASSESSMENT AREA/LOCATION	Nokalakevi, Senaki District, Samegrelo, Georgia
PERSONS AT RISK	Staff, students and volunteers of the Anglo-Georgian Expedition
PROPERTY AT RISK	Project equipment, Georgian cultural heritage
DATE LAST REVISED	23-02-16

HAZARD	EFFECT	CONTROL MEASURES
Fieldwork	General risk of minor injury such as cuts, grazes, sprains and strains. Some risk of more serious injury to yourself and those around you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants are required to have up-to-date tetanus protection and to declare in advance any relevant medical conditions. ▪ Instructions to be given in safe use of tools and use of PPE; avoidance of sustained repetitive activity; maintenance of good practice for manual handling and lifting activities. ▪ Sturdy boots to be worn at all times. ▪ Eye protection to be worn where necessary. ▪ No lone working on site. ▪ Advice provided as to appropriate clothes, sun protection <i>etc.</i> ▪ First Aid kit on site.
Trench sides and deep excavation	Injuries caused by tripping, falling, section collapse <i>etc.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Running not permitted on site. ▪ Awareness of trip hazards at trench edge and from crumbling sections. ▪ No single vertical face will exceed 2.0m in depth. ▪ If project staff deem a wall, or section face to be unsafe work next to it will cease until appropriate precautions have been taken. These may include stepping or battering or, in extreme cases, shoring, so that there is no risk of a section collapse causing injury to those working next to it. If it is not possible to take such precautions work will not continue in that area. ▪ No one should stand, or particularly work with tools, at a trench edge below which people are working. ▪ Those working below should ensure it is safe to shovel spoil or rubble out of the trench.
Hand tools	Injury to yourself and others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Instruction in correct use of tools will be provided. ▪ All tools to be checked prior to use on site. Project directors or supervisors should be made aware of any unsafe tools. ▪ Tools to be only used for the purpose for which they were intended. ▪ Proper handling of tools, with awareness of proximity to other staff (especially in areas where excavators are working at different levels). ▪ Suitable, shallow-slope wheelbarrow runs to be established when required. ▪ Tools should not be left lying on site.
Finds washing and recording	Minor injuries to hands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gloves should be worn if required. ▪ Project directors or supervisors should be advised of skin or other

		conditions suffered by participants that may be affected by such work.
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Weather	Risk of heat-related health problems (dehydration, heatstroke, sunburn etc.), lightning strikes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work to cease in thunderstorm conditions. ▪ If the weather is extremely hot then regular breaks for shade and refreshment will be taken. The daily work schedule may also be altered. ▪ Participants to be advised as to water and salt intake and appropriate PPE: in extremely hot weather an individual should consume from 6 - 8 litres of water a day to avoid dehydration; <u>if you are not sweating you are dehydrated.</u> ▪ The wearing of hats or headgear and T-shirts will lessen the dangers of heatstroke. ▪ Everyone must be aware of the people around them; <u>erratic or eccentric behaviour is an early indication of heatstroke.</u> ▪ Sun cream should be worn in bright sun. ▪ Participants to ensure they are adequately covered. It is culturally insensitive and potentially dangerous in hot weather.
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Poisonous fauna	Threat varies from unpleasant illness to possible fatality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are poisonous snakes and invertebrates in Georgia. Safety briefing to include advice with respect to walking through brush and off tracks where snakes may be concealed in the undergrowth, participants advised to walk slowly and make plenty of noise. When lifting a rock on site or elsewhere it is possible that something may be hiding beneath it: participants are advised to move slowly, with a shovel or mattock at arms length and to treat everything as suspicious.
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Crime, kidnapping, terrorism and insurgency	Georgia (as with many other third world and former eastern-bloc countries) presents some increased risk of crime, including kidnap and terrorism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attention will continue to be paid to Foreign Office advice with respect to travel to Georgia, but the Foreign Office does not currently suggest that the Senaki or Martvili (the two nearest towns) areas are dangerous to work in. The project takes place at the opposite end of Samegrelo province to, and is divided by a range of hills from, the Tsalenjikha and Zugdidi regions. ▪ Contact has been made with the British Embassy in Georgia. The expedition members and their location will be registered with them. All participants are required to read and understand the FO advice to British citizens with respect to travel to Georgia (and their own countries' where volunteers are not UK citizens). ▪ The project is a full collaboration with the Georgian State History Museum expedition. Local advice will be sought and adhered to with respect to the crime and the political situation. ▪ Participants are specifically advised to avoid travelling alone, to avoid locations that present opportunities for crime including kidnap, to act with great caution with respect to currency and valuables, and to keep others informed of their movements at all times.
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Political Instability	Tensions between Georgia and the <i>de facto</i> independent, autonomous regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia led to war with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We believe (along with experts) that a repeat of the 2008 war with Russia is unlikely. ▪ Rural Nokalakevi is remote from areas directly affected by current or potential instability. The expedition is unlikely to be directly affected by political instability. ▪ We closely follow the political situation in the region and heed the
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	<p>Russia summer 2008. The Pankisi gorge region has in past years been impacted by the Russian war in Chechnya. Georgia remains politically polarized & opposition demonstrations might provoke crackdowns.</p>	<p>advice of the Foreign Office and of our Georgian partners with regards to our security.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All British volunteers are registered with the British Embassy in Tbilisi. ▪ Volunteers of other nationalities are advised to register with their own embassy. <p>(See also section on crime, terrorism, kidnapping and insurgency.)</p>
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<p>Infrastructure issues (Power outages, telephone)</p>	<p>Due to shortages, the electricity supply can be occasionally unavailable. There is no fixed telephone line in Nokalakevi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants are advised not to travel in larger towns and cities at night when streets are unlit due to higher risk of accidents, crime <i>etc.</i> ▪ A generator will be provided to ensure power is available for essentials (fridge <i>etc.</i>) and participants advised to bring a torch. ▪ A mobile telephone will be taken, and contact telephone numbers provided for relay of messages.
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<p>Health and food</p>	<p>Accidents on site and at lodgings, risk of stomach upsets, contaminated food <i>etc.</i> The best hospitals in Tbilisi are 5 hours away. The nearest hospital is 40 minutes away.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First aid kits are made available at workplaces and in vehicles and all volunteers should carry their personal medical kit with them. ▪ Volunteers are advised to only drink bottled or filtered drinking water. Stomach upsets may nevertheless be expected, and participants are advised in this respect. ▪ The project employs two experienced local housekeepers to prepare our meals. ▪ Qualified first-aiders are on site. <p>Participants are required to carry their own sterile packs in case of need.</p>
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<p>Fire</p>	<p>Property damage and threat to participants from fires</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Warnings to be issued about safety, with respect to potential fire hazards.
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<p>Earthquake</p>	<p>Georgia is situated in an area of seismic activity. There was a 5.4 magnitude earthquake in Sagarejo nr. Tbilisi in September 2013.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participants are advised that should an earthquake occur, they should exit buildings or trenches in an orderly fashion and stand in an open area clear of risk of falling debris.
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Situated at the strategically important crossroads where Europe meets Asia, Georgia has a unique and ancient cultural heritage, and is famed for its traditions of hospitality and cuisine.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17301647> Updated: 22 January 2016

OVERVIEW

Over the centuries, Georgia was the object of rivalry between Persia, Turkey and Russia, before being eventually annexed by Russia in the 19th century.

Since emerging from the collapsing Soviet Union as an independent state in 1991, Georgia has again become the arena of conflicting interests, this time between the US and a reviving Russia. Tense relations with Russia have been further exacerbated by Moscow's support for the separatist regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Georgia's brief interlude of independence after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution in Russia ended when it was invaded by the Soviet Red Army in 1921 and incorporated into the Soviet Union a year later.

The US has a major strategic interest in the country, having invested heavily in an oil pipeline from Azerbaijan via Georgia to Turkey. The Georgian armed forces have been receiving US training and support. Increasing US economic and political influence in the country has long been a source of concern for the Kremlin, as have Georgia's aspirations to join NATO and the EU.

Tensions between Moscow and Tbilisi are never far from the surface and in August 2008 flared up into an armed conflict triggered by clashes between Georgian troops and South Ossetian separatist forces.

POST-SOVIET YEARS

Following the collapse of communism in the USSR in 1991, Georgians voted overwhelmingly for the restoration of independence and elected nationalist leader Zviad Gamsakhurdia as president. However, Gamsakhurdia was soon overthrown by opposition militias which in 1992 installed former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze as the country's new leader.

During his 11 years in office, the Georgian people felt increasingly at the mercy of poverty, corruption and crime. He was ousted in November 2003 following mass demonstrations over the conduct of parliamentary elections.

Once a relatively affluent part of the USSR, with independence Georgia lost the cheap energy to which it had access in the Soviet period. As relations between Georgia and Russia deteriorated, Moscow did not flinch from tightening the economic screws, and the rupturing of trading ties caused the Georgian economy to nose-dive.

Georgia was initially heavily dependent on Russia for its energy supply. Like other Soviet states, it was badly affected when the price of gas supplied by the Russian gas giant Gazprom rose sharply in 2006. Since then, it has succeeded in diversifying the sources of its energy supplies, and now receives most of its gas from Azerbaijan.

BREAKAWAY REGIONS

Since independence, the people of Georgia have endured periods of civil war and unrest as well as violence related to the independence aspirations of the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

Both regions had close ties with Russia, whose troops had operated there since the early 1990s. In 2008 Moscow formally recognised the two territories as independent states, following an armed conflict between Georgia and Russia that grew out of clashes between Georgia and Russian-backed rebels in South Ossetia. Russia has effectively controlled the two breakaway regions since then, and both are heavily dependent on Russian aid.

Moves by Russia to formalise its ties with Abkhazia and South Ossetia in late 2014 and early 2015 triggered fears in Georgia that Moscow was seeking to annex the two statelets.

LEADERS

President: Giorgi Margvelashvili

Giorgi Margvelashvili took office in November 2013, bringing to an end the decade-long presidency of charismatic reformer Mikhail Saakashvili. He cruised to victory with around 62% of the vote at an election the previous month. Mr Margvelashvili, a former philosophy lecturer, assumed a weakened role because constitutional changes that come into force with his inauguration transferred a raft of key powers from the president to the prime minister. He had little political experience and was seen as beholden to billionaire Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili, whose coalition drove Mr Saakashvili's party from power in the 2012 parliamentary elections. Mr Ivanishvili stepped down as prime minister after Margvelashvili's inauguration, saying his goal - ousting Mr Saakashvili - was now done. He denied accusations he would continue to run the show from the sidelines.

Mr Saakashvili's tumultuous decade in power saw him transform the tiny Caucasus nation, while getting sucked into a disastrous five-day war with Russia over the breakaway republic of South Ossetia in 2008.

Mr Saakashvili came to power after the 2003 Rose Revolution and rammed through reforms to combat corruption, renovate infrastructure and kick-start a sickly economy.

Several figures close to Saakashvili, including a former prime minister, have been arrested and charged with a variety of crimes. The former president himself has taken Ukrainian citizenship and now serves as governor of that country's Odessa Region.

Critics - including EU politicians - say this is a targeted campaign against allies of the former president. Defenders say it is a justified reckoning with the misdemeanours of the former government.

Prime Minister: Irakli Garibashvili *(AGEN note: he has now resigned – elections to be held in 2016)*

COUNTRY STATISTICS

Population: 4.3 million (UN, 2012)

Capital: Tbilisi

Area: 69,700 sq km (26,911 sq miles)

Major language: Georgian, Russian widely spoken

Major religion: Christianity

Life expectancy: 71 years (men), 77 years (women) (UN)

Monetary unit: 1 lari = 100 tetri

GNI per capita: US \$2,860 (World Bank, 2011)

Internet domain: .ge

International dialling code: +995



We monitor the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website for current travel advice and require our volunteers to also be familiar with it (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/georgia>) or, where relevant, their own government’s advice.



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Please complete this form carefully and return it to one of the directors of the Expedition

FULL NAME				DATE OF BIRTH				
CITIZENSHIP		PASSPORT NO.		EXPIRY DATE				
UNIVERSITY				YEAR OF STUDY				
RESIDENT (TERM TIME) ADDRESS			PERMANENT (OR HOLIDAY) ADDRESS			NEXT OF KIN'S ADDRESS (INC. NAME)		
TEL			TEL			TEL		
MOBILE			MOBILE			EMAIL		
EMAIL			EMAIL			RELATIONSHIP		
ARE YOU A TRAINED FIRST AIDER?						IS THE QUALIFICATION CURRENT?		
INSURANCE						DETAILS:		
it is a booking condition that you must be covered by comprehensive travel insurance. Please take this insurance seriously, making certain you are covered from the day you pay, in case you need to cancel.								
Insurance Company			Policy Number			24hr Medical emergency telephone (provided by your insurers):		
DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS?								
DO YOU HAVE ANY KNOWN MEDICAL CONDITIONS OR ALLERGIES?								
<i>It is possible to discuss this confidentially with one of the directors if you prefer</i>								

- I have read and understood the latest advice from the British Foreign Office (and my own country's where applicable) with respect to travel to Georgia, particularly with respect to the risks of crime (including kidnapping), terrorism and health. I understand that although we will take all possible precautions to identify and control risks, the Anglo-Georgian Expedition cannot provide absolute guarantees of safety with respect to circumstances beyond our control
- I have read and understood the Risk Assessment and agree to abide by the advice and instructions of the project directors and supervisors with respect to working practice and all other aspects of conduct during the course of the project
- I have made the project leader(s) aware of any relevant circumstances that may affect my participation in the project
- I will check with my local GP or Travel clinic and obtain all relevant vaccinations well in advance of the expedition

SIGNED			DATE		
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