

164th ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL FOR THE SUBSCRIPTION YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

The Council meetings in November 2019 and January 2020 were, as usual, held at the Museum of London but the situation regarding the COVID-19 pandemic meant that all subsequent meetings were held virtually, by email, or latterly, via the Zoom platform. As far as possible, Council and the Society's Committees continued to function online from March 2020.

The Society continues to be represented at meetings of the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee but is currently looking for someone to represent it at the Council for British Archaeology London.

Lecture meetings (report by Kathryn Stubbs)

The lecture series season ran from October 2019 to May 2020, in the Clore Learning Centre, Museum of London and included a joint lecture with the Prehistoric Society. The lectures are announced on the website, social media and the London Archaeologist Diary page. The lectures were very well attended, as usual, and Council are pleased to meet the many members and guests who attend each month. Unfortunately, the national lockdown in March 2020, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, meant that we were unable to hold the lectures in April and May and these lectures were postponed.

The October lecture '1066: The Siege, Surrender and Triumph of London' given by Kathleen Tyson was a fascinating record of the siege of London, and is described in her book, 'Carmen Widonis – The First History of the Norman Conquest'. In November Bruce Watson gave an overview of new research on constructing medieval bridges, 'Building Bridges to Heaven: sponsoring bridge construction in medieval England' which were often built by local communities and as a pious charitable deed. In December Robert Hradsky, Associate, Alan Baxter Ltd, gave a wide ranging lecture on the history of the 17th century houses in Denmark Street which have seen homes, metal working, music publishing, guitar shops and early days of punk rock! Nigel Jeffries of MOLA gave the January lecture on 'Which bottles are 'Witch bottles'? Exploring Ralph Merrifield's legacy in the field of early modern bottle magic in England' and the preliminary findings of a three year AHRC funded research project being carried out with historians at the University of Hertfordshire, which builds on and re-evaluates the work pioneered by Merrifield. In March, Janet Clayton, of the Orpington and District Archaeological Society gave a lecture entitled 'Scadbury Manor: research and excavation at a moated site in South-east London' about the Society's extensive research and investigations of the original medieval manor house and estate, uncovering new information and widening understanding of this area. We were very disappointed to postpone the April lecture from Eniko Hudak of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd, entitled 'Additional Kilns of the Roman Thameside Ceramic Zone: Excavations at the land of the former Mardyke Estate, Rainham, London Borough of Havering' and the Joint Prehistoric Society and LAMAS lecture 'Revealing a Late Bronze Age enclosure' from Andrew Peachey, Archaeological Solutions in May. Council would like to thank Eniko and Andrew for being very understanding of the situation and were pleased that they agreed to give their lectures in the 2020-2021 season.

At the AGM in February, the Society's President, Taryn Nixon, gave her third and final Presidential Address, 'Fifteen Decisive Battles for London Archaeology', a thought provoking examination from the Battle of the Teutoberg Forest and the expansion of the Roman Empire through to collaborative working, promoting new archaeological techniques, planning campaigns, archaeology's value to society, the importance of a sense of belonging, and the role societies like LAMAS and our affiliated societies have in bringing people together.

LAMAS Lates (report by Jane Sidell)

The programme of Late Events has been sadly constrained over the last year, as they are generally visits and walks. We had been due to take a tour of Huguenot Spitalfields, Bunhill Fields, the William Morris Centre, etc but all have been postponed. We were able to have a guided tour of the Secret Rivers exhibition in the Docklands Museum in October 2019, where curator Kate Sumnall gave us her vision for the exhibition and showed us highlights, ranging from prehistoric artefacts to contemporary art installations. We have trialled virtual tours via Zoom, with Jane Sidell giving a 'tour' of London Wall in August 2020, and Stephanie Ostrich leading another Zoom 'tour' of the course and history of the Earls Sluice stream in south London.

Whilst Zoom is a poor replacement for live events, it will have to do for the time being. More events are being planned, but if members have suggestions, please do get in touch with Jane Sidell.

Newsletter, Website and Publicity (report by Richard Gilpin and Karen Thomas)

Three issues of the Newsletter were published during the year. The January issue was printed and distributed through the post as previously but, owing to distribution problems created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the May and September issues were not printed. They were instead sent out as PDFs to members whose email addresses were known to the Society. This meant that no printed copies of the May and September issues were sent to those members who either (a) had no email address or (b) had one but had not registered it with the Society. The PDF versions were also made available on the Society's website.

Work has continued on updating the Society's website and we have also been looking into upgrading and developing the website in the near future. Our social media presence has continued to grow with over 1,700 followers on Twitter alone and we have now also opened a Linked In account. Social media has been very effective in advertising LAMAS events and attracting new audiences to our Lectures and Lates.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing government lockdown meant that from March 2020, Council meetings, Late events and the new Lecture season have all had to move online via the Zoom platform and the Society is extremely grateful to the Publicity team for all their hard work in enabling this to happen smoothly and efficiently.

Membership (report by Dr Fiona Haughey)

This year membership numbers have dipped below 600 – the reason, I suspect, may be due in part to the current financial constraints forced on us by the pandemic. For those members who have failed to notice, notification of the annual renewal on Oct 1st is now printed inside the summer Newsletter (in both paper and electronic forms), as noted in last year's report. Also, information on the various ways of paying your subscription can be found on the LAMAS web site as well as the various fees so please do check whether you are paying the correct amount in a way which is most convenient for you. Last year, a number of copies of the Society publications were returned, as the various members had moved house and had not let us know their new address. Please make sure to drop me a line or email should this happen to you so I can amend your record! Many thanks.

Research Fund

The 2019/20 Research Fund grant was awarded in December 2019 to John Schofield and Rebecca Gordon for their project 'The search for Jewish food in London's medieval Jewry' which entails the analysis of the animal bones from 10th to 13th century pits at Milk Street, excavated in 1976-7 (MKL76). It is hoped to award the 2020/21 Research Fund grant during 2021.

Publications Committee (report by John Schofield, Chair)

The Committee met three times during the year; normal meetings in November 2019 and March 2020, but due to the pandemic the subsequent one was via emails. Volume 69 of Transactions was published in November 2019; it has 332 pages and 16 further of introduction.

We have found a new History Editor: Maggie Bolton. The onset of the pandemic during early 2020 has delayed some projects, such as the digitisation of Peter Marsden's collection 35mm slides of his 1960s and 70s City of London fieldwork, which is funded by CoLAT. Future plans for his publications with LAMAS are therefore on hold. We continue to support Robert Cowie's efforts to obtain funding for the publication of a major report on the 1997-2018 excavations at Syon Abbey, which will be published in a future volume of Transactions. Bruce Watson is working with the Archaeology Data Service on the production of an index for all articles in LAMAS Transactions from 1860 to 2016, which will form a new online database.

Archaeology Committee (report by Jon Cotton, Secretary)

Due to the current Coronavirus restrictions the Committee has not met in person this year, and the 2020 Annual Archaeology Conference had to be postponed.

Initially we had hoped to hold this later in the Autumn, but this too proved impossible. As a result, the 2020 Conference will take place 'live' via Zoom on 20 March 2021, with an afternoon theme focusing on Monastic Archaeology.

The Committee continued to monitor the London archaeological scene remotely and noted concerns regarding ongoing difficulties in Enfield and the drafting of Barnet's Archaeological Priority Areas. We plan to reconvene via Zoom in 2021.

The Committee also took part in the consultation exercise on the Government White Paper *Planning for the Future*. This proposes a radically different approach to that enshrined in the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, with major implications for the capital's built and buried heritage. The LAMAS response to the proposals will be set out in the January issue of the Newsletter (No 161).

Local History Committee (report by Pat Gough, Secretary)

The Committee held two meetings, in January and May 2020. Owing to problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the latter took place as an exchange of emails. The members of the Committee were John Price (Chair), Roger Chapman, Richard Gilpin, Pat Gough, Oliver Harris, Alex Werner and Lorraine Woodleigh. Sam Sharpe resigned in October 2019.

The Annual Local History Conference took place in November 2019 at the Museum of London on the theme of "'In Sickness and in Health": The Wellbeing of Londoners Through History'.

Papers were presented as follows: 'Belgian refugees in London's asylums: the case of Colney Hatch' by Rob Ellis and Rebecca Gill; 'The extraordinary health care history of the Cleveland Street Workhouse' by Ruth Richardson; 'The information legacy of the Nurses Registration Act 1919' by Teresa Doherty; 'Clamour of need': London mothers and Paddington Green open Clinic' by Sally Alexander; 'The Plague-Endemic experience in the Suburban Environs of Early Stuart London' by Aaron Columbus; 'The Criminal Corpse and Anatomy in London c.1600-1800' by Anna Cusack.

The keynote address, 'Smithfield and the Central London Markets' was given, at short notice, by Alex Werner, Lead Curator, New Museum, Museum of London.

The winners of the Local History Publication awards, presented during the annual conference, were Merton Historical Society for its book *Our Convict Son: Harold Brewster 1895-1958 – A Merton Objector to Conscription*, and Hornsey Historical Society for its journal *Hornsey Historical Society Bulletin* 59. The winner of the award for best newsletter was Chadwell Heath Historical Society for *Newsletter – Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter*.

Historic Buildings and Conservation Committee (report by Robert Briggs, HBCC representative to LAMAS Council)

This was a year of two (unequal) halves for the Historic Buildings Conservation Committee, with the pandemic curtailing our monthly meetings at our established venue in Cowcross Street from March 2020 onwards. A monthly agenda continued to be produced and cases discussed by Committee members, but over email. Minutes in absentia were also produced every month by our wonderful Secretary, Vicki Fox, and shared for circulation among LAMAS Council members.

The Committee was as busy as ever, submitting letters of objection to an array of developments, from the high-profile proposals regarding Richmond House in Westminster (site of temporary Houses of Parliament), Bishopsgate Goodsyard and Truman Brewery in Tower Hamlets to many smaller domestic ones. In December 2019 the Committee welcomed Mike Heyworth, the outgoing head of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA), to its meeting along with Harvey Sheldon as LAMAS Council Chairman, to discuss a number of matters relating to the activities of the CBA.

Over the course of the 12 months we gained a member and then unfortunately lost her owing to the relocation of her work to Bristol. We continue to desire the expansion of our membership to help share out the applications we scrutinise each month, but efforts to recruit new members have been paused as a consequence of the pandemic.

BY DIRECTION OF COUNCIL

Harvey Sheldon
Chairman of Council

Karen Thomas
Honorary Secretary