

167th ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL FOR THE SUBSCRIPTION YEAR ENDING 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

All five Council meetings held during this year were online via the Zoom platform. Both Council and the Society's Committees have largely continued to function either online via Zoom or are gradually returning to in person meetings.

The Society continues to be represented at meetings of the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee and the Council for British Archaeology London.

Lecture meetings (report by Kathryn Stubbs)

The lecture series programme ran from October 2021 to May 2022 and included a joint lecture with the Prehistoric Society. The lectures are announced in the Newsletter, on the website, social media and the diary page of *London Archaeologist*. The COVID 19 pandemic and ongoing restrictions meant that all lectures were held via Zoom, booked through Eventbrite, as we were unable to hold the lectures at the Clore Centre, Museum of London. Lectures are recorded and available on YouTube after the event.

The lectures were well attended and continued to attract a wide audience, including attendees from outside London, Europe and the US, which has helped to raise the profile of LAMAS and London's archaeology and history. Council would like to thank lecturers and members for their understanding at this time and it is hoped that physical meetings can be held again soon.

The October lecture was given by John Schofield on 'London's Waterfront 1666 to 1800: an introduction to a large project'. This was a comprehensive account of the post Great Fire archaeology recorded at Billingsgate in 1982, with links to slavery. A wealth of structures and finds from the site, including the 14th century Billingsgate Trumpet, were described as well as a wider view of the archaeology of both banks of the Thames, as far as Deptford. In November, Dr Martin Dearn, Fieldwork/Research Director, Enfield Archaeology Society gave a lecture on 'The EAS and Elysing Tudor royal palace'. The activities of the Society were summarised, particularly the long term excavations at, and research into the fifteenth to seventeenth century courtiers's and later royal palace of Elysing, now in the grounds of Forty Hall in Enfield. Recent work has been carried out on one of the service wings, uncovering the history of this large but little known house. The December lecture was given by Helen Chittock and Les Capon, AOC Archaeology, entitled 'Where practice trenches meet Roman ditches: Roman and wartime archaeology at Royal Liberty School, Havering'. The excavations revealed evidence of the parklands and gardens of Hare Hall, built 1769-70, now occupied by the school, remains of the zig-zag shaped practice trench from its World War I use as a training camp for the Artists Rifles Regiment, World War II civilian shelters and Roman linear features, adding to understanding of Roman occupation in this area. In January, Emma Tetlow, Skanska-Costain, gave a lecture on 'Hillingdon's Hidden History' describing excavations along the line of HS2, where a large Late Iron Age potin (tin rich bronze) coin hoard was found. The hoard comprised about 300 coins dating from the 1st century BC and appeared to have been buried in an organic container such as a bag. They were apparently not buried near a settlement and may have been deposited in a sacred place, along a tribal boundary or concealed secretly. The March lecture was given by Peter Mills and Michael Hutchinson, Mills Whipp Projects, on 'The Civil War Defences of London: Rewriting History (and Archaeology)'. Their recent work on the archaeological and documentary evidence has led to a revision of defensive lines and forts, which were previously based on an 18th century map. The form and function of the defences was also reassessed. In April, the lecture by Danny Harrison, MOLA, on 'The Icehouse at Park Crescent West' was unfortunately cancelled due to illness. The Joint Prehistoric and LAMAS lecture 'Hidden depths - revealing new insights into the archaeological remains from the London reaches of the River Thames' took place in May, given by Nichola Arthur. Recent research has been carried out on a large number of human skeletal remains, many of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age date, recovered from the river over the last two centuries. Previous debates have focussed on

whether their presence is due to ritual deposition practices or fluvial processes. New work, including radiocarbon dating, osteological analysis and stable isotope analysis has revealed new insights into the assemblage and its deposition.

At the AGM in February, in a departure from our usual Presidential Address, Council was pleased to introduce Alex Werner, Museum of London, who gave a talk on the proposals for the Museum of London's move to the new site at West Smithfield, including a history of the buildings and plans for the new galleries.

LAMAS Lates (report by Jane Sidell)

The warmer summer months gave us the opportunity to start the Lates again with a walk in May led by Jane Sidell around the north-west elements of the London Wall. Jane took a small group around the surviving above ground sections of wall (and one section skulking in an underground car park!) pointing out interesting features and recounting the intricacies of their conservation.

In June Chris Constable led a walk through Roman Southwark giving members the opportunity to see Landmark Court, the site of the recent important mosaic finds (although these had already been lifted) and putting these new findings in the context of what we already know about this part of Roman Southwark. The highlight was a privileged trip up close to the statue of King Alfred, revealed by Chris at last year's Archaeology Conference, as containing a large chunk of a Roman statue!

If anyone has any good ideas about places to visit on future Late outings please do let Jane know.

Newsletter, Website and Publicity (report by Jane Wheeler and Karen Thomas)

Three issues of the Newsletter were published (in PDF and print formats) during 2022. Karen Thomas supporting Richard Gilpin in his last edition (number 164), and continuing to support the new Honorary Newsletter Editor (Jane Wheeler) who took over in time for the May edition (number 165), and for the September issue (number 166). The majority of digital copies are slowly increasing as the PDF format becomes requested by members. Printed versions are still being published for postal distribution to members without an email (or known email) address.

The Society's continuing presence on social media has helped to attract new members and attendees to our lectures and conferences, including several from overseas.

We continue to upload lectures and talks from the online conferences (where it has been agreed with the speaker) onto our YouTube channel where they are proving quite popular.

Membership (report by Karen Thomas)

Membership numbers stayed fairly constant during the year but were markedly down on pre-pandemic levels so it was decided by Council to set up a Membership Working Party looking at recruitment of new and retention of existing members, including the range of benefits available. In September, Fiona Haughey expressed her wish to stand down from the role as continuing ill health was making it difficult for her to carry on. Council would like to thank Fiona for her work during a very difficult time and has begun the search for a new Membership Secretary.

Working Party on the Future of LAMAS (report by John Schofield, Chair)

This Working Party was set up to look at what the Society should be doing differently going forward to reflect the current heritage situation. They have started work on an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and will be looking at the circumstances under which LAMAS might seek to express views in public on heritage issues in London.

Research Fund (report by Karen Thomas)

As we still had 2 ongoing projects which had suffered delays due to the covid restrictions, it was decided not to offer a new grant for 2021/22. It is hoped that a new grant for 2022/23 will be made available.

Publications Committee (report by John Schofield, Chair)

The Committee met three times during the year. Volume 71 of *Transactions* was published in November 2021. It has ix + 392 pages, so significantly larger than previous volumes, and contained ten articles and a reviews section; including the important excavation report on Syon Abbey by Robert Cowie. The project to make security copies of Peter Marsden's 35mm slide collection, funded by CoLAT, was completed. We welcomed Jane Wheeler as the new editor of the society's newsletter. John Schofield is helping to organise the disposal of the former members' library, by a combination of offering antiquarian titles to a dealer for sale, donations of books and journals to other London-based libraries, and offering British archaeological journals to archaeological units for their own libraries. Work continues by the editorial team.

Archaeology Committee (report by Jon Cotton, Secretary)

The Committee met remotely via Zoom three times during the year, in January, May, and September, welcoming Sian Anthony of AOC Archaeology Group onto the Committee in May. Regular reports on fieldwork and other matters were received from MOLA, Pre-Construct Archaeology, AOC Archaeology Group, and from GLAAS.

The Committee responded to a request from the London Borough of Tower Hamlets for comment on the proposed new Chinese Embassy at Royal Mint Court, along with other bodies such as GLAAS and Historic Royal Palaces. Projects such as this underlined the importance of maintaining an independent archaeological voice within the capital.

Other issues that continue to concern the Committee include the mooted Government Levelling Up Bill; the abolition by the Corporation of London of its Assistant Director: Historic Environment post; and the future of the London Archaeological Archive.

A sub-group of the Committee has met regularly to plan for a major conference on Roman London, in conjunction with King's College London, and The London Archaeologist magazine.

The Committee organised the 58th Annual Archaeology Conference, which was held via Zoom in March 2022. Once again this was professionally facilitated by SyncSkills and featured a series of 'live' and recorded presentations.

The 2021 Ralph Merrifield Award was given jointly to the Museum of London and to Archaeological Solutions Ltd for delivering the *Secrets of the Havering Hoard* exhibition under lockdown conditions at the Museum in Docklands, following which the morning session contained presentations on the Alfred Statue in Trinity Square; the excavations at St Lawrence's Church, Brentford; the Roman cemetery at Great Suffolk Street; excavations at Park Street, Southwark; and the site at Landmark Court in Southwark Street.

The afternoon session was devoted to the archaeology of High Speed 2 and was addressed by John Halsted and Emma Hopla (HS2 Historic Environment overview); Iain Williamson (the Dews Farm area); Emma Tetlow (Iron Age potin hoard from west Ruislip); Guy Hunt (St Mary's, Stoke Mandeville) and Louise Fowler (St James's Gardens, Euston).

Local History Committee (report by John Price, Chair)

The Committee met on three occasions, October, February, and May. The members of the Committee were John Price (Chair), Richard Gilpin, Pat Gough, Oliver Harris, Mike Marriott, Alex Werner and Lorraine Woodleigh. Richard Gilpin resigned from the Committee in June 2022 due to ill health.

The Annual Local History Conference took place online via Zoom in November 2021 on the theme of 'London Overcomes: Resilience and Recovery in the History of the Capital'.

Papers presented were as follows: 'Lost angels of a ruin'd paradise' (Dr Peter Coles); 'Casualty Services and Civil Defence within London' (Nathan Hazlehurst); 'Shamefaced No More: Pauper Letter Writers, Resilience and the Workhouse Experience in Poplar and Bethnal Green, ca.1860-1890' (Dr Peter Jones & Professor Steven King); 'The Brentford Flood of 1841' (Val Bott); 'Who hid the Cheapside Hoard?' (Dr Rosemary Weinstein).

The keynote address was: 'Modernist Visions vs. Reality in Postwar Rebuilding' (Dr Catherine Flinn)

The winners of the Local History Publication awards, presented during the annual conference, were as follows:

LAMAS Publication Awards for 2020: newsletter winner, Chadwell Heath Historical Society; journal winner, Camden History Society; book winner; winner: *How Hampstead Heath was Saved: a story of 'people power'* by Helen Lawrence published by the Camden History Society.

LAMAS Publication Awards for 2021: newsletter winner, Pinner Local History Society; journal winner, Richmond Local History Society; book winner, *Medieval Morden: The Manorial Economy 1280-1500* by Peter Hopkins published by the Merton Historical Society.

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

The most significant and positive development over the 12 months was the return to monthly in-person meetings at 75 Cowcross Street, recommencing in March 2022. Not only did this give meetings a more convivial atmosphere but also an environment that permitted greater engagement with and discussion of the cases that give cause for concern.

In recognition of the resumption of in-person meetings, Dr William Filmer-Sankey, Director of Alan Baxter Associates (operator of the Cowcross Street venue), joined us prior to our April 2022 meeting to discuss the work of the HBCC and how this could be brought to the attention of those who work and use the building. This led to the submission of a piece about HBCC for the in-house e-newsletter.

In July 2022, we welcomed Neil Redfern, Executive Director of the Council for British Archaeology, to speak to the HBCC about his vision for the roles that organisations like LAMAS can play in securing the best outcomes through the planning system for heritage assets at risk from inappropriate development.

A total of 44 responses were written and sent by HBCC in the 12 months, all logged in a spreadsheet implemented to improve tracking of our responses and their outcomes. As in every year, the proposals in question ranged from very small to very large. One case that stood out was the proposed conversion of the Grade I-listed Custom House in the City of London to a hotel, which was refused consent in October 2021, leading to a high-profile planning inquiry in January—February 2022 and eventually a decision at the end of July 2022 that dismissed the appeal and upheld the original decision (this was documented in greater detail in a LAMAS Newsletter piece).

The year brought some disappointments but also a considerable number of successes for the HBCC in the cases it took an interest in across Greater London. LAMAS HBCC again perceived its impact often to be greatest in places which lack Conservation Area Advisory Committees or local amenity societies active in reviewing planning applications. It remains on the look out for new members, especially in the boroughs which currently lack a person or people who review applications every month as part of “their beat”, using knowledge of and/or interest in the historic buildings and archaeology of the locality.

BY DIRECTION OF COUNCIL

Harvey Sheldon
Chairman of Council

Karen Thomas
Honorary Secretary