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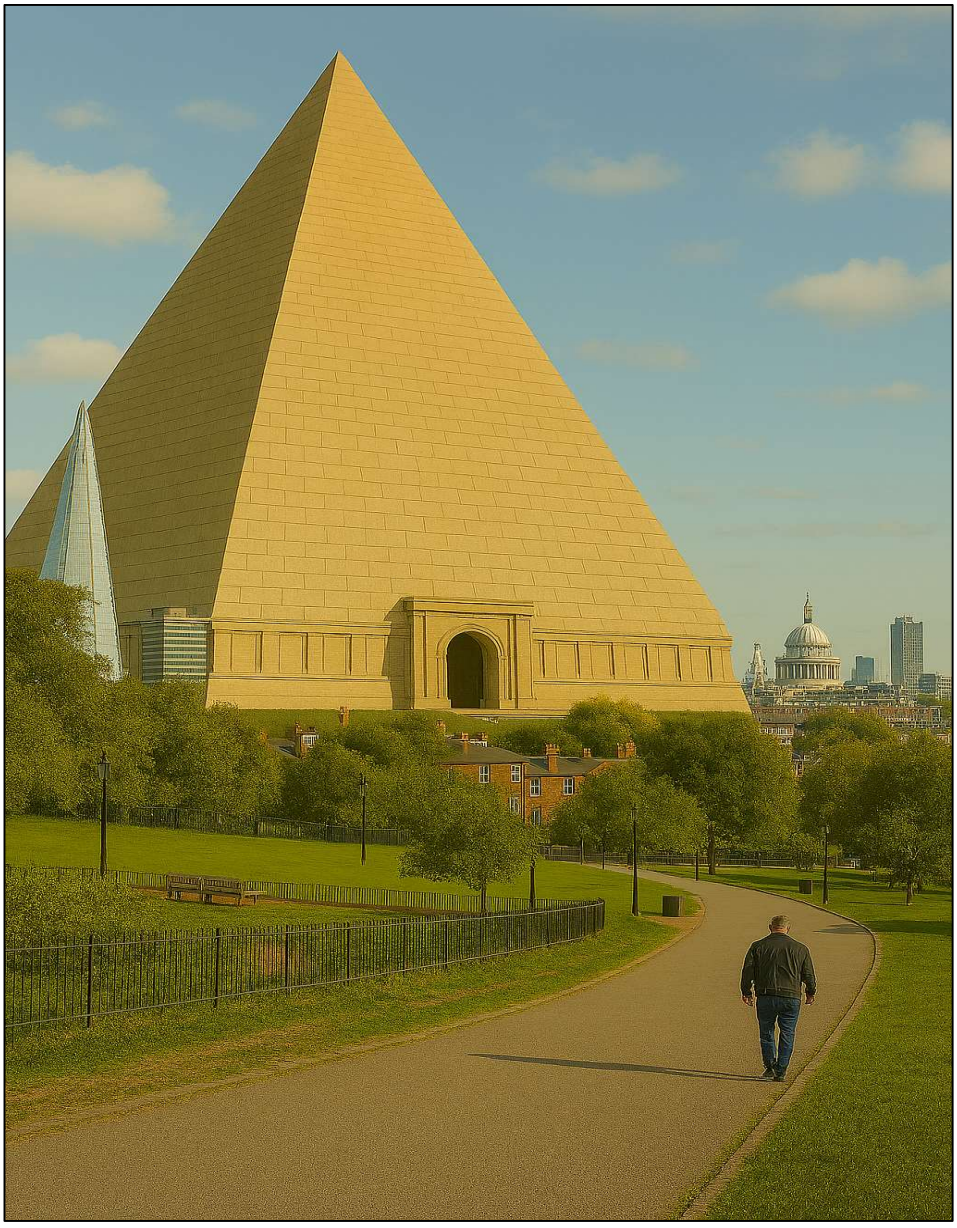
Issue 176 January 2026

LAMAS NEWSLETTER

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Above ground structures such as The Shard, the BT Tower, the Walkie-Talkie, and Wren's stalwart St. Paul's Cathedral are familiar "tall" London landmarks. However, *what if* Thomas Wilson's proposed 1820s plan for a Metropolitan Sepulchre pyramid had been built? Primary objections to its construction were its overwhelming height and visual dominance (at almost four times higher than St. Paul's) - a "monstrous piece of folly". It was, and also for a variety of other reasons, never built. But … *what if it had*?

Image: J. Wheeler.

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NOTICES

Editor's Introduction

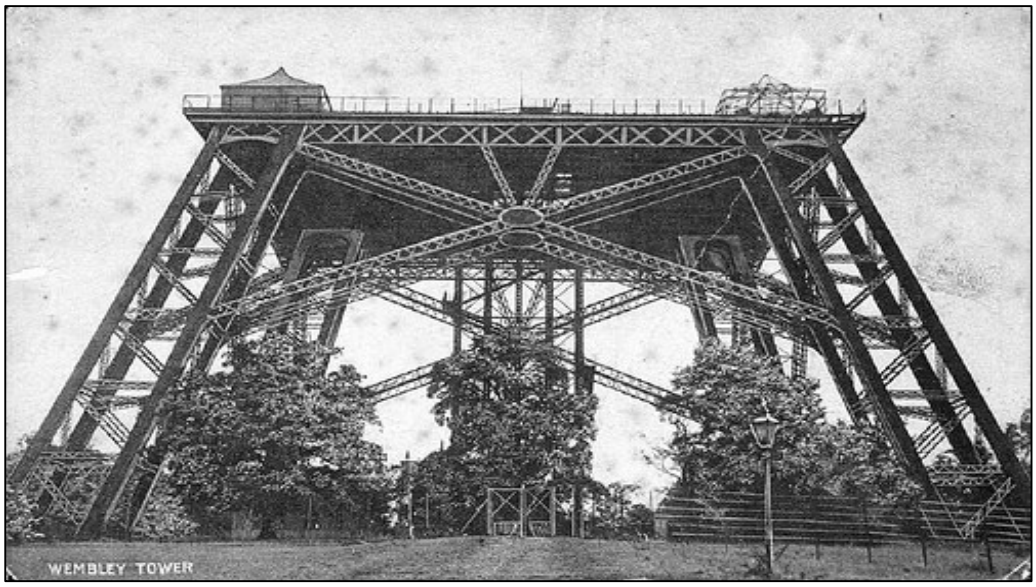
John Ricketts's and John Schofield's contribution (see pages 19-22) to this, the first, LAMAS Newsletter of 2026, made me think. Firstly, about the impact of tall buildings on London and also the increasing utilisation of AI for imaging (and imagining). We often see the computer generated and architectural representations of what new builds will look like included in the press releases and planning applications. AI might be the new kid on the block, but high buildings are nothing new to London. The major and protected dome of St Paul's Cathedral being one of the most famous protected vistas in London. This policy of 'St Paul's Heights' has been in operation by the City of London since 1937. There are in total 13 vistas protected by the London View Management Framework. Succinctly, that is views to St Paul's, views to the palace of Westminster, and mixed landmark views.



Willson's Pyramid Mortuary.
Image: Guildhall Library/historic-uk.com

The front page of this Newsletter (issue 176) is a mock-up of the 'what if' the Metropolitan Sepulchre had been constructed in the vicinity of Primrose Hill in the 19th century. This colossal 94-storey pyramidal necropolis, designed by architect Thomas Willson, and first proposed in 1824, had a base which covered 18 acres with a planned space for 5 million bodies.
It was also four times the height of St Paul's.

Another ‘what if’ structure was Watkin’s Tower, London’s equivalent of an Eiffel Tower. The iron lattice structure in Wembley Park was only partially completed. Sir Edward Watkin wanted to build the tallest structure in the world. The Eiffel Tower was indeed the world’s tallest structure when completed in 1889 – and profitable. Watkin’s sited his tower on marsh out at Wembley. The site was muddy and obviously marshy, with poor load-bearing capacity. The iron lattice began to tilt and deform as parts of the foundation sank. Only the first stage (about 47 metres) of the tower was completed before work was stopped due to safety issues and the lack of funding. The incomplete structure was eventually dismantled in 1907. The site later became home to Wembley Stadium.



The first and only completed stage of Watkin’s Wembley Tower - between completion of the first level in 1899 and its demolition between 1904 and 1907.
Image: www.commons.wikimedia.org / Public Domain Review.

Other proposed structures such as the Millennium Tower (a structure to replace the bombed Baltic Exchange (1996)) which was superseded by The Gherkin; the Green Bird (1990) at Lord’s; Citygate Ecotower (2002) (Aldgate High Street); and the Mile-high Eco Tower (2008) (the site was not determined) were never built. However, planning for tall building continues – and remains controversial.

Jane Wheeler

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MAY Newsletter*: *Next LAST SUBMISSION Date
by ***Friday 8th May 2026.***

Articles, news, and items for inclusion should be submitted prior to the cut-off date which falls between the two May Bank Holidays. Word document, with text font ***Times Roman 14’*** to: **newsletter@lamas.org.uk**

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LAMAS Membership – December 2025

The rush of renewals for the start of the LAMAS year has now died down and the task of writing to members who have not paid has started. 84% of members have currently paid. This is about the same number as last year. From those I have written to a number of members have asked when the LAMAS year starts. The LAMAS year starts on 1st October each year - subscriptions become due on this date. If you have not paid, for 2025/2026, membership subscription rates are:

Ordinary (Individual) members	£20
Joint members (must be at same address)	£25
Student members (without Transactions)	£6
Corporate/Institutional members	£30
Affiliated local societies	£25

For payment by bank card, use the payment option on :- https://www.lamas.org.uk/my-account/ (if you do not have an email address registered for your account email **membership@lamas.org.uk** with a request to associate your email with the account and give details of your postal address).

Details for paying by bank transfers : CAF Bank Limited, Sort Code: 40-52-40, Account No: 00017438, Beneficiary: London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. Cheques payable to London & Middlesex Archaeological Society (in full), should be sent to Membership Secretary (see my address on the back page of this Newsletter).
Any questions, comments or changes regarding your LAMAS membership do let me know, preferably by e-mail or alternatively by post.

John Shemilt, LAMAS Membership Secretary
membership@lamas.org.uk

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The 2025/26 LAMAS Research Fund – Final Submission 28.02.2026

LAMAS has been offering a research fund since 2005. Applications are welcomed from members of LAMAS or its Affiliated Societies for grants to support research and/or publication of projects on a wide range of subjects to further our archaeological and historical understanding of London and to be of interest to LAMAS members.

The Fund is set at £10,000 and an application can be made for all or part of this amount. Terms and conditions are available on the website at **https://www.lamas.org.uk/research-fund-committee** or from Karen Thomas **secretary@lamas.org.uk**

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Notice for the 62nd Annual Conference of London Archaeologists

Saturday 21st March 2026
London Museum Docklands, West India Quay
PROGRAMME

Tickets for this hybrid event (priced £20) will be made available via the LAMAS website. Space will be available for exhibitions and bookstalls; contact Jon Cotton to book a space (joncotton1956@gmail.com)
The programme will include the presentation of the 2025 Ralph Merrifield Award.

Confirmed titles and speakers for the morning session starting at 11am include:

- A view from Londinium's Northern Hinterland: The farmstead at Marlowe Road, Ellen Green, AOC Archaeology Group
- Imperial Suburbia: New Excavations on The Highway, Shadwell, Harry Platts, PCA
- Some new finds from the Thames, Kate Sumnall, London Museum
- Post-medieval finds at the Segro site, Wapping, Alex Blanks, MOLA
- Recent excavations at Woolwich Arsenal, Isca Howell, MOLA



Nick Pearcey (on the right) kiln builder after an experimental kiln firing, 1972.
Image: www.highgateromankiln.org.uk

Pending the reinstatement in Highgate Wood of a Roman pottery kiln originally lifted in the 1960s, the afternoon session will explore the site and the pottery industry that developed there in the light of recent research. Confirmed speakers (with others to follow) are Harvey Sheldon and Nick Peacey. The afternoon session will commence at 2pm and conclude at 5.30pm.

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LAMAS Publicity Up-date



Since September 2025 LAMAS has begun to increase its focus on publicity and profile in line with its overall aims of promoting and encouraging the study of London's archaeology and local history. The objective is to increase membership, extend our profile to younger age groups, and increase overall engagement to ensure LAMAS is in good shape for the future.

The main developments to date have been on social media which have involved the re-posting of content on our Facebook and LinkedIn channels. Facebook continues to be an important channel to post articles, events and news as it is also used extensively by many of our affiliated local history societies so we can share each other's content - thus increasing reach. There is a lot of archaeology and history content shared on Facebook in the UK overall. Our number of followers on LinkedIn have now trebled and this is an important channel for LAMAS as many of the commercial archaeology companies we have relationship with have a presence here. We can now have our own voice in this community where the audience profile is also slightly younger and is more work-related.

Other forthcoming initiatives include engaging better with London's academic institutions such as Birkbeck and UCL and getting more involved in PR related issues. We plan to re-engage on Instagram next year.

What can you do to help? If you are on Facebook and/or LinkedIn please do two things. 1: Follow our page to receive updates. 2: Like and/or share LAMAS updates with your own Facebook and/or LinkedIn followers. That will grow our own community, help to increase awareness of LAMAS, and encourage new members to join. Thank you for your help.

Right click on the hyperlink below and in the pull down menu that appears click onto Open Hyperlink.

Https://www.linkedin.com/company/london-and-middlesex-archaeological-society

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064419686660&locale=en_GB

Richard Hebblethwaite

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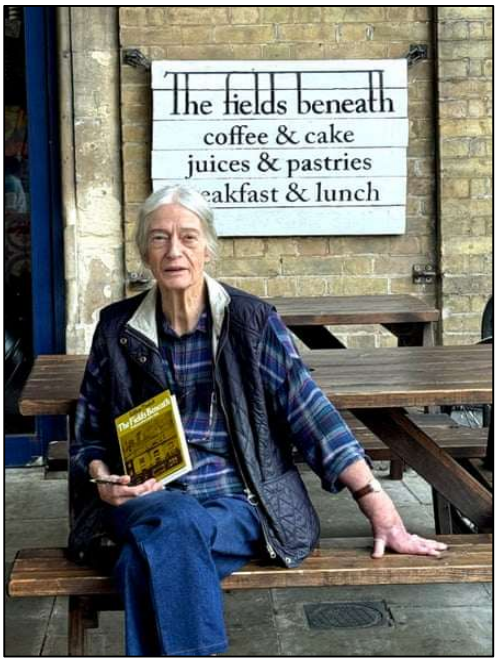
Obituary – Gillian Tindall

Gillian Tindall was born in 1938 and had a difficult childhood which taught her to sort her own life out. She went to Oxford and left Lady Margaret Hall with a First in English and her first novel already published. This was well received so she decided on writing rather than academia as a career, which she continued for the rest of her life. She died in October 2025 aged 87.

She wrote novels and factual books. Her last book, *Journal of a Man Unknown*, published the month after her death, is a novel but contains many scenes based on research into her family's past. This work is the imagined diary of a 17th century Huguenot ancestor (published by Spitalfields Life Books).



Gillian at the café in Kentish own, that took its name from her 1977 book The Fields Beneath.
Photo: R. Lansdown/The Guardian 15.10.2025)

She also wrote about France, where she had a house for 40 years, and a book about Calcutta. Pioneering a new style of historical writing, *The Fields Beneath: The History of One London Village*, was published in 1977, chronicling the history of Kentish Town from its origins as an ancient village to its threatened destruction by urban planners post-WW2 and subsequent changes. She and her husband, Richard, moved into a Georgian house in Kentish Town in the 1960s and threw themselves into recording what they saw before it disappeared. Many historical books followed, including *The House by the Thames* and *The Tunnel Through Time,* the latter an exploration of the layers of London history revealed by excavations for the Crossrail line.

She contributed to the conservation of many areas and, through its Committee on Historic Buildings, to LAMAS - of which she was a past president. She would insist on visiting the sites to see the buildings and their surroundings, not just rely on acquired information. Her major focus latterly was on the proposal to erect a totally inappropriate 20 storey tower block over Liverpool Street station. London is the richer for Gillian having lived and the poorer for losing her.

David Goreham

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LAMAS 170th Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address

Tuesday 10th February 2026

Notice is hereby given of the LAMAS 170th Annual General Meeting and Presidential Address to be held on Tuesday 10th February at 6.00pm, in The Gallery, Alan Baxter Ltd, 75 Cowcross Street, EC1M 6EL. The AGM will be followed by the Presidential Address, given by Vanessa Harding – 'Mapping Restoration London' (see Lecture Programme below). Although this will be a live AGM, and we would be very pleased to see as many members present as possible, it is also intended for the event to be broadcast via Zoom. Details will be circulated when tickets become available at the beginning of February via the LAMAS website. Booking is essential for online attendance and desirable for in person attendance.

AGM Agenda is as follows:

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 169th AGM, 2025
3. Annual Report and Accounts
4. Election of Officers and Members of Council
5. Appointment of Examiner(s)
6. Election of President
7. Any Other Business

Copies of the Minutes of the 169th AGM, held on 11th February 2025 and the Annual Report and Accounts will be made available via email prior to the meeting. If any members not on email would like a copy, please contact the Secretary at the address given on the back page of this *Newsletter*.

Council would welcome nominations for anyone interested in becoming a member of Council. These should be addressed to the Chair at the address given on the back page of the *Newsletter*, or by email to the Secretary (secretary@lamas.org.uk) to arrive no later than Tuesday 27th January 2026.

LAMAS Lecture Programme - 2026

Lectures will take place from 6.30pm - 7.30pm with refreshments from 6pm. Please arrive, if attending in person, between 6-6.30pm.

Lectures will be hybrid - held in person and on Zoom/Zoom webinar.

To attend a lecture, members are requested to book on the LAMAS website. It is not essential but it does enables us to track numbers. See the lecture calendar below. Non-members are very welcome and are requested to book tickets using the link on the LAMAS website – either to attend in person OR on Zoom. Non-members are requested to donate to LAMAS to help cover the costs of providing the lectures.

Please check the LAMAS website and social media for details of the lecture location.

10th February 2026 LAMAS AGM and Presidential Address
Please note that the AGM will start at 6pm and the Presidential Address will follow by Vanessa Harding, Emeritus Professor of London History, Birkbeck, University of London.

Mapping Restoration London
This lecture follows on from last year's, in which Vanessa explored the process of mapping early Tudor London, c. 1520, using the Historic Towns Trust's map published in 2018. Mapping Restoration London, on the eve of the Great Fire of 1666, presents new challenges and logistical problems. Over the period from the 1520s to the 1660s, London's population increased four- or five-fold, and the built-up area spread far beyond the walled city, linking Westminster and the east end in a single metropolitan conurbation. There is no shortage of sources for mapping this transformation, and for the first time we have contemporary picture-maps and perspectives showing us what London looked like, though the first surveyed maps date from the 1670s and 1680s.



Credit: *Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection*
Image*: encyclopediavirginia.org*

The Fire itself, while destroying four-fifths of the walled city, generated plentiful documentation that allows quite detailed reconstruction of most of the burnt areas. The real challenge is to collect and collate all the data needed to present a map covering the whole of London, without drowning in detail. By the time of this lecture, the project to create such a map will be well under way, and I will report on progress, challenges encountered, decisions made, and first glimpses of the finished product.



Image: *Historic England Archive.*

10th March 2026
Emily Gee
Hostel, House and Chambers: Accommodating the working woman in Victorian and Edwardian London
A vast wave of Edwardian women working in cities created an urgent need for an affordable and respectable new business-minded enterprise: the single

woman's hostel. This talk describes the campaigns to house a new generation of intrepid working women, the specialized design of the buildings, and the women whose lives were changed by this remarkable architecture.

14th April 2026
Nathalie Cohen
National Trust Archaeology in London and Middlesex



Osterley House, London. ***Image: National Trust***

This talk will present information about some of the National Trust's properties in the Greater London area located across 15 of the 32 boroughs. The presentation will discuss the wide variety of archaeological sites cared for by the conservation charity located within a range of urban and suburban contexts, from grand mansions (such as Osterley and Ham House) to landscapes and parklands, plus some of the Trust's smaller properties and curiosities like the Strand Lane Roman Bath.

12th May 2026
Diane Abrams
Archaeology Lead, Houses of Parliament Restoration and Renewal
Archaeology at the Palace of Westminster

This talk will focus on the history and archaeology of the Palace of Westminster and Diane's role as Archaeology Lead at Houses of Parliament Restoration and Renewal. Learn about the approach being taken to understanding archaeological significance and survival across the site to inform future design and management on this major programme, while also enhancing existing research on this part of the World Heritage Site.



Image: *Houses of Parliament Restoration & Renewal Programme.*

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LAMAS 59th Local History Conference - 2025

Food Glorious Food

Building on the success of 2024, it was great to be back at the Museum of London Docklands for the LAMAS Local History Conference on Saturday 15th November. The conference theme, 'Food Glorious Food', provided an excellent prompt for a varied and fascinating range of presentations. It was also encouraging to see more exhibition tables and to experience the enthusiastic history 'chatter' throughout the day.

The first speaker of the day was **Christopher Batten**, a PhD student at University College London, whose paper addressed **"The Alimentary Question": Food, Imagined Community, and the Experience of Civilian Internment in First World War London**. During the First World War, tens of thousands of enemy aliens (German men of military age) were confined in internment camps across the British Empire. In London, the principal camps were those at Olympia, Islington and Alexandra Palace. The latter two of which remained operational into 1919. A key factor in making camp life tolerable, and in allowing the diverse body of inmates some sense of community, was food. The speaker drew on a range of sources to explore issues of food provision, including official administrative records, inspection reports by third-party observers (the Society of Friends, and representatives of the neutral United States and Swedish governments), and the personal recollections of internees, notably the anarchist Rudolf Rocker. While these sources are sometimes contradictory, it is clear that the quality and quantity of food did vary - at times meagre but adequate, at other times badly inadequate. On the whole, inmates in the London camps were marginally better fed than those in the largest internment camp, at Knockaloe on the Isle of Man; but, along with the wider population, internees experienced a considerable reduction in rations during the food crisis of 1917. Through the medium of food, the paper provided a valuable insight into the internment experience.

The next session moved on a generation to another war: **Simon Fowler**, an active local historian and current PhD student at the University of Leicester, spoke on **"Home and Hominy": the American Red Cross clubs in London during the Second World War**. A number of lightly regulated service clubs existed in wartime London, providing food and recreational facilities for military personnel on leave. American troops initially made use of the Canadian Beaver Club, but dedicated American clubs soon began to appear. The American Red Cross became the principal provider, running clubs without public funding and with the help of numerous volunteers. The largest and best known of the ARC clubs, open 24 hours a day, was that at Rainbow Corner, a former Lyons Corner House not far from Piccadilly Circus; but the organisation ran many others, as

well as mobile canteens. All were highly popular, giving GIs a nostalgic taste of home life, including the opportunity to savour food and drink otherwise unavailable in Britain - imported with no little difficulty. An unstated aim was to steer American servicemen away from the less wholesome temptations of London life, including pubs and loose women – although Rainbow Corner lay in close proximity to some of London's most notorious red light areas. The American clubs were not officially racially segregated, but in practice an informal colour bar does seem to have existed, with separate clubs being established for coloured troops, as well as others for women. Rainbow Corner continued to operate until January 1946, and even after it closed its name lived on in other 'Rainbow Corners' opened in newly liberated Europe.



Following a short break, the audience took their seats for the conference's keynote lecture. The keynote speaker was **Dr Phil Carstairs**, a historical archaeologist and buildings historian specialising in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The lecture focussed on **'London soup kitchens 1795-1914: feeding the poor of the nineteenth century metropolis'**.
Phil set the scene by explaining that, after the Huguenot charity *La Soupe*, England's first soup kitchen, stopped providing soup in 1741, there were no soup kitchens operating until the 1790s. Yet, by 1799 soup kitchens were so common that hardly anyone in London would have been unaware of them.

At least 150,000 Londoners (nearly 20% of London's population) probably attended soup kitchens regularly between 1799 and 1801. We learned how newspapers across the nation reported on their activities, and how London soup kitchens provided the blueprint for mass-produced charitable food for the next century. Despite this, Phil explained, soup kitchens in London slipped from view until the late 1840s, not even featuring in Charles Dickens' fiction, despite his interest in depicting the life of London's marginal inhabitants. A mid-century revival saw soup



kitchens become so prevalent in the capital that they became one of the 'worst evils of the present day' according to some influential social reformers. Sadly, almost all London's soup kitchens have vanished, like the steam from simmering soup, leaving only a faint aroma, a thin trail of documentary evidence and occasionally a building, but most are lost or forgotten. Phil's keynote really illustrated how food can form the focus for understanding the relationships between rich and poor at a time of great social division and change. Charitable food was crucial for some people's survival but for others was a means of influencing and controlling.

After lunch and following the presentation of the LAMAS Publication Awards for 2024, the first session of the afternoon was a presentation by **Dr Katherine Connelly**, lecturer at Boston University's London centre and at NYU London, titled **"There is no such thing as scarcity": Food, the docks and the revolutionary politics of the East London Federation of Suffragettes**.



This paper considered the politicisation of hunger in the East End, before and during the First World War, by suffragette activists. One example was the series of Cost Price Restaurants established, as food prices spiralled following the outbreak of war, by Sylvia Pankhurst and the East London

Federation of Suffragettes to combat starvation among the working classes. However, the roots of this approach in fact lay several years earlier in the efforts made by suffragettes and others to help feed dockers' families during the 1912 dock strike. Such practical support on the ground was complemented by political lobbying, and the speaker highlighted the arguments put forward by Melvina Walker, a docker's wife from Poplar – in deputations to Whitehall, in public agitation in Chrisp Street Market, and in a number of articles in The Woman's Dreadnought – that there were in fact ample quantities of food being imported through the docks, and that the scarcity of food in the homes of the poor should be blamed, not on the war, but on the evils of capitalism and lack of truly democratic representation. The question of food therefore lay at the heart of a more radical and revolutionary outlook within the suffragette movement.

Sadly, the second speaker in the panel, **Malcolm Thick**, was unable to attend the conference due to ill health. However, John Price, Chair of the Local History Committee, read the paper and showed the wonderful illustrated slides that accompanied it. The paper examined **'Orange sellers on the streets of London', just one of the many comestibles hawked daily on the City's streets**. The paper explained how oranges were grown commercially in Spain and Portugal, and from the late sixteenth until the early twentieth century were imported into London, with many sold on the streets. Merchants sold them to street traders in lots of around 20 or 30. Orange sellers were very numerous but had little status amongst costermongers. It was an easy trade to get into: a small stock of oranges required only a few pence outlay. Orange sellers, therefore, were often beginners in street trading, including children, and those who were very poor, such as elderly women. Originally many sellers were Jewish, then Irish sellers predominated. The paper went on to contend that one particular obstacle to orange-selling was that the supply was seasonal. In 1824 J. C. Loudon could estimate the cost of oranges in Covent Garden market in only 8 months of the year. In 1850, Henry Mayhew recorded imports arriving from October to August. Malcolm's presentation cited sources including Old Bailey records and Mayhew's work, illustrations from magazines such as Punch and Figaro in London, and paintings.

After the refreshment break, the final panel of the day looked at the medieval and early modern period. First up was **Vanessa King** presenting her paper, **'Food for Thought: The use of Subtelties in Medieval Banquets'**. Vanessa started by providing a definition of a subtlety- something which is not what it seems to be. She went on the explain how the three Lancastrian Kings, Henry IV, Henry V and Henry VI used such devices in the coronation banquets to send a message to support the dynasty. This was part of a comprehensive propaganda programme and the subtelties became increasingly sophisticated: – for Henry IV a ritual to emphasise his right to be king in 1399; Henry V to support a robust foreign

policy 1414; and Henry VI his role as King of England and France 1429 despite his minority. Whilst no images survive of the devices there are descriptions. They note brightly coloured dishes were served with exotic foodstuffs – peacocks and swans. The cygnet served in the first course of Henry IV's coronation was a reference to Henry's mothers' heraldic badge and in the third course a 'pott of lillies'- perhaps referencing to the fleur de lys of France. Henry V's feast provided a 'counterfeit brawn slice and within the rib there is a great swan for [a] subtlety sitting upon green stock displayed with a scripture in his bill emphasising good kingship and six cygnets outlining his role to keep good law, guard the faith provide justice, followed by an antelope for [a] subtlety with a script "un sauez plus maynteyn dieux"' and then 'Eagles of gold display for subtlety with the words "This notable day is honourable"'. Henry VI's subtelties showed the arms of St Edward (for England) and St Louis (France) with the king in his coat of arms with the words '…. God graunt he may thurgh help of Crist Jhesu/ This sixt Henry to reigne and be as wise/ And hem(Henry V) resemble in knighthood and virtue'. Thus the feasts had provided food for thought for all to be consumed.

The final paper of the day was **'Lord Cranfield's 1621 Sugar Christening 'Bankett''** by **Stephen Draper**. Stephen highlighted that 1621 was an important year for Lord Cranfield. This banquet was for the christening of his first son. Cranfield was newly wed to Ann Brett a young cousin of George Villiers, who had been given away by King James I who also took on the role of godfather to the boy. In that year Cranfield had been raised to the peerage in July and then appointed Lord High Treasurer of England in September with the christening held on 28th December. The vast sugar banquet was designed to show off Cranfield's wealth and his magnificent mansion, Chelsea House which was developed by Inigo Jones, fellow member of the Mitre Club in London, and his stonemason Nicholas Stone. The household books of Morgan Colman for Lady Anne and her husband provide details of the vast quantities of sugar and fruit purchased for the sugar banquet, a particular favourite of James I. While no recipes are available 179 different items are listed, involving almost a ton of dried fruits. In addition, Cranfield paid for the hire of glasses, carriages and fuel together with boxed confections and American produce, for example pomegranates used to make pink icing. There were 224 lbs of sugar-coated confits as well as confits covered with gold leaf. By 1600 sugar was available as a luxury for the middle classes, but this occasion rivalled, even outstripped the grandest state banquets of the time.

LAMAS Publication Awards - 2025

As usual, the LAMAS publication awards were announced and presented at the 2025 Local History Conference. It was a bumper year for entries in the best newsletter category with a record number of submissions. The

standard of newsletters was also exceptionally high and the judges found it so hard to decide on an outright winner that two joint winners for the 2025 award were chosen.

The joint winners of the 2025 award for **Best Newsletter**, each receiving a prize of £50, were **The Camden History Society** and the **Barnes and Mortlake History Society**.

The **Barnes Mortlake History Society** produces its newsletter quarterly in a consistent format. Membership News and Forthcoming Events can be found on page 6 of the booklet; details of the society tend to be found on the penultimate page and Lecture Programmes on the very last page of the booklet.



The newsletters, in a A5 layout, are attractive and inviting containing mostly coloured photos. The schedule of lectures is wide ranging on subjects such as: The Royal Kitchens at Kew; The Kit Kat Club; Bomb Disposal in World War Two; Mills of the River Wandle; Pet Revolution: Animals and the Making of Modern British Life.
They also contain obituaries of former members, reviews on the lectures, current BMHS Publications and useful information for members.

The articles cover such topics as: The Ghosts of Ranelagh, based on an article in the News Chronicle on 22 March 1949 which covered the compulsory purchase of the Ranelagh Club and grounds; The Strange Link of Hammersmith Bridge and the attempts to blow it up in 1939, 1996 and 2000; John Moody, 'Gentleman' or 'Comedian' born in 1726/27 in Cork who became a lead actor and made his debut appearance at Drury Lane in 1759 before his career plunged and he retired to Barnes; William Dawson: Of Royal Blood? Born around 1795 William Dawson had a successful career in the navy before retiring to Barnes and family rumour has it that he was the illegitimate son of The Prince of Wales and Mrs Maria Fitzherbert; Heroines of the Holocaust; two sisters who smuggled money past Nazi border guards for Jews fleeing Germany and housed them in a rented flat in Pimlico paid for by one of the sisters. In 1964 Israel conferred the honour the Righteous Among the Nations upon them.

Camden History Society takes a great deal of care over its newsletters which are produced every two months for its members. The newsletters are formatted in the same way to provide a uniform consistency. The newsletters provide a wide, varying schedule of talks over the following two months such as *Coram's Fields Playground: A Retrospective Look*

given by John Mason or *St Giles-in the Fields: The History of a London Parish: Illustrated talks* by Rebecca Preston and Andrew Saint.



The subsequent reviews are well written up. An interesting mix then follows of diary dates, short articles, notices, local events, subscriptions, obituaries, books, the AGM or general local information that might interest the members.

The articles, which are very varied, cover topics such as the life and early death of Captain Matthew Flinders, a naval captain navigator and cartographer, who in 1801 lead the first circumnavigation of mainland Australia and mostly lived, when not at sea, in Soho and Fitzrovia, a report by Ian Hamilton on the impact of bedbugs on Somers Town residents in the 1930s, the enterprising story of Carlo Gatti who came to Britain in 1847, lived and worked around Camden, started with a chestnut stall and became London's largest ice merchant, the story of Tolmer Cinema in Tolmer's Square. The Camden History Society details are always posted at the end of the newsletter. The newsletters are in an A4 format and contain a mix coloured and black and white photos.

The **winner of the £100 prize for best Journal** went to the **Hornsey Historical Society for Bulletin 65 (2024)**.



The **Hornsey Historical Society Journal** is a professional looking booklet which is beautifully edited by Sandra Clark. The journal starts with an article on The Hillcrest Estate, Highgate: Thomas Bennett was selected as the architect for this well liked large public housing scheme, built towards the end of WWII, to help rehouse families made homeless by bombing and other damage. The next article looks at the Victorian Theatre at Alexandra Palace originally envisaged as a Palace of the People and now a dynamic space used as a playhouse and a filming and streaming venue. The current Hornsey School for Girls sits on the former site of the Ferne Park Estate which was built in the 1880s and Thomas Dence was one of the principal builders. The Balaclava Banquet was an impressive culinary and musical event on 25 October 1875 which celebrated the Anniversary of the Battle of Balaclava fought in 1854. The banquet was followed by a Grand Military Concert which comprised 500 performers and ended by a Grand Display of Fireworks. Robert Sherington started his career as a newspaper publisher in 1879 in North London. By 1901 he broke from journalism to become a commercial traveller for Chappell music and wrote

a successful book on Hornsey's history. Chandan Fraser displays her photos of the Hornsey College of Art sit-in in 1968 which was one of the longest and most contested of student protests. The article "Hornsey in Literature" sites the many references to Hornsey in literature from such famous authors as Daniel Defoe's *A Tour thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-7), Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748), Dicken's, *David Copperfield* 1848/9), Arnold Bennett's *Hilda Lessways* (1911), Stephen King's *Crouch End* (1980), Ruth Rendell's *The Green Road* (1981) and the *Killing Doll* (1984), Vitaly Vitaliev's *Granny Yaga* (2014) and many more. The Book Review section is located at the end. The Journal offers lively, interesting articles with good notes and referencing and well-illustrated with colour and black and white photos or images.

The last prize presented was for best book.

The Committee highly commend the **Hounslow & District Local History Society and the Brentford and Chiswick Local History Society** for its joint publication, *The Great West Road A Centenary History* by James Marshall which came a very close second to the winner.



The winner of the 2025 award for Best book, and the prize of £100, was the **Hornsey Historical Society** for, Hugh Flouch, *Abyssinia: Hornsey's Lost Village* (Hornsey Historical Society, 2024).
Abyssinia: Hornsey's Lost Village tells the story of a small housing enclave built from the late 1860s principally for the working classes to the east of Tottenham Lane in Hornsey. When the Great Northern Railway arrived into Hornsey in the mid-1800s the low land prices and proximity to London made the area an attractive proposition for building homes. British Land Company, one of the freehold societies set up to remedy the unfairness of the electoral system, since only men who owned land could vote, acquired building plots in an area which up to now had the reputation of being the perfect rural retreat for the wealthy with few dense working-class housing developments. The homes provided for the working class in Abyssinia were of a better standard than those provided elsewhere at that time. Abyssinia may have got its original name from the patriotic feeling over the Abyssinian War but eventually it started to be known as Hornsey Vale.

Abyssinia was composed of mainly young incomers to the district with children with most of the working men below or near the poverty line. Houses started to be inhabited by more than one family and overcrowding

and insanitary conditions were rife. Although life was hard, Abyssinia offered recreational and spiritual opportunities with its two pubs, a church (in 1877) and Mission rooms (in 1883), a memorial hall which provided a home for the Sunday school, a community centre, Saturday night concerts, cookery classes and a gym and the Abyssinia Working men's club. By the 1950s most of the houses in Abyssinia were in bad condition and deemed unfit for habitation and were subsequently demolished. Hornsey Girls School was built on the former site.

Hugh Flouch's book is an interesting and well referenced local history book, containing over 100 photos, maps, and journal cuttings from national, local and private collections.

John Price

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If you enjoyed the Local History Conference …. Why not join the LAMAS Local History Committee?



The Local History Committee represents the interests of LAMAS's Affiliated Local Societies. Part of its work involves organising the Local History Conference and the Publication Awards – for which affiliated societies submit their books, journal and newsletters.

The Committee needs more members! So if you have an interest in London's local history and would like to get involved drop John Price a quick email : **johnprice.historian@outlook.com**

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Who wants tall buildings?

Here are two perspectives on the impact of tall buildings on London's heritage, summarising presentations given at the November open meeting of LAMAS's Historic Buildings and Conservation Committee (HBCC). The views are those of the authors, not necessarily those of HBCC.

The view from Richmond - by John Ricketts

It has been ten years now since New London Architecture, the independent membership organisation for London's built environment sector, produced their landmark survey of the tall buildings (436) that were in the pipeline for London in 2015, and the issue of the impact of such buildings on their surrounding streetscapes and heritage remains highly pertinent across the capital.



Homebase, Manor Road, Richmond: The scheme refused by LB Richmond but approved by the Mayor of London. **Image: Applicant's planning application.**

What is the definition of a tall building? Actually, it remains undefined in national policy (the NPPF), and definitions in Local Plans (LPs) vary. The London Plan (Policy D9) states that "tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable" in boroughs' LPs, a stipulation which itself was inserted on the direction of the Secretary of State. An example in LB Richmond (the Homebase, Manor Road site) illustrates the Mayor of London riding roughshod over the borough's plans to restrict tall buildings to appropriate areas. The borough's Local Plan (in draft stage at that time but in force since October this year) stated that tall buildings – now defined by the borough as seven storeys or over - should be restricted to Tall Building Zones (TBZs) as defined in the LP. The Homebase site is in a TBZ which the LP specifies as suitable for heights of up to eight storeys, to respect the small scale of the surrounding area and heritage assets.

In May 2024, and in the face of considerable local opposition, the Mayor finally approved an application for a dense array of buildings of up to 11 storeys on the Homebase site, on the grounds that other requirements of the London Plan, specifically the need for more residential units, trumped the borough's tall building restrictions. The application had been refused by the borough in 2019 on the grounds *inter alia* of the adverse visual impact of the tall buildings. Requests by local campaigners for the Secretary of State to call the application in, particularly in light of his direction that "tall buildings should only be developed in locations that are identified as suitable" in Local Plans, were refused with no reason given,

despite the fact that a similarly large scale scheme nearby (the Tesco and Homebase sites in Syon Lane, Hounslow) was called in by the SoS.

The application is now being superseded by a new scheme reconfigured in the light of financial viability concerns given the economic climate, but the maximum building height is still 10 storeys, 25% above the limit stipulated in the Local Plan. What price local democracy?

The view from the City - by John Schofield



Computer image of two skyscrapers which have obtained consent: 99 Bishopsgate (left) and 55 Bishopsgate (right). The view looks east along Wormwood Street.

Image: RSHP Architects.

There are two areas in the City where tall buildings are allowed and encouraged: the first in Bishopsgate and Cornhill, the second a smaller area around Holborn. Tall buildings in the City are defined as those which reach above 75m above Ordnance Datum or sea level; so that is not 75m above ground level where the building is. Gracechurch Street is at about 17m above Ordnance Datum. The general grouping of the cluster is a bit of a mess. It is not Chicago, which in many ways is a model of how tall buildings can be accommodated and indeed enhance a skyline.

The City Cluster of tall buildings around Bishopsgate is straining at its boundaries and pushing out. The Corporation in its own policy paper says 'important views of St Paul's Cathedral must be protected and enhanced' – but the now consented tower at 99 Bishopsgate (on the left in the photo) removes precious space from around the cathedral's dome when viewed from the west. Objectors (Historic England and the Surveyor of the Cathedral, Sir Christopher Wren's successor) say the new building will cause significant harm to the heritage significance of a Grade I listed building, the cathedral. The developer has not produced any detailed views of how the building would stand behind St Paul's, which is probably significant and certainly rings alarm bells.

The building at 99 Bishopsgate will be 236m high; the Shard is 303m. The design itself is quite good. There is a lot of public space to be set up around its base. But there are no heritage benefits. It might be acceptable on another site; here, it is just in the wrong place. 55 Bishopsgate, the block's neighbour to the south (on the right in the photo), was already consented, over the objections of Historic England, the cathedral and others. These blocks are intrusions. They disrupt with their scale and siting. And tall buildings are sprouting outside the areas allocated for them: for instance in Whitechapel.

In the case of tall buildings, we are contending not only with developers or the owners of sites, but with planners. We have to criticise and influence the planners. Tall buildings may be necessary for the future of the City of London, as they bring jobs and taxes, but they have to do more in respecting the previous built heritage around them. Our economic future and our history need not be at odds. What can LAMAS do? We need to make sure tall buildings are a positive contribution to the townscape and not a negative one. We can read carefully the views of bodies like St Paul's and Historic England when they object and possibly add our support to their objections. We need to consider strategic views of the City skyline and its major monuments.

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Fulham Palace Trust awarded £571,000 from Arts Council



Image: www.fulhampalace.org

Fulham Palace Trust announced in October 2025 that it had been awarded £571,000 from Arts Council England's Museum Renewal Fund to strengthen its organisational and financial resilience. The Museum Renewal Fund is designed to address the operational and financial pressures faced by civic and local authority-linked museums, helping reduce the gap between costs and income that can risk curtailing programmes, opening hours, staffing or public access.

'*This funding* […] *is a vital lifeline for Fulham Palace Trust.* Allowing the Palace *to bridge the gap in a period of financial uncertainty and to ensure that our cultural, educational and heritage programmes can continue uninterrupted.* Committing *to keeping the Palace house and garden free for all […]. Said* Sian Harrington, Chief Executive of the Trust.

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Central London Young Archaeologists' Club

During the autumn half term we visited a small archaeology exhibition, Patterns Beneath Our Feet, at UCL East's Culture Hub, located in an impressive modern building near the new V&A East museum and storehouse. From 2015 to 2019, Archaeology South-East (UCL) excavated a large multi-period site in Whitechapel. The most attention-grabbing find was the discovery of what is thought to be the earliest purpose-built 16th century playhouse in England called the Red Lion. As well as viewing the exhibition our members met an archaeologist who worked on the excavation, handled some finds and engaged in some related activities. We hope to organise future collaborative sessions with UCL on the history and archaeology of east London.



'If Walls Could Talk …' in November we looked at how wealthy Romans decorated their rooms, the designs they chose for their frescoes, what colours the artists used and how they were made.

We learned about the fragments of fresco found at the Liberty site in Southwark and watched a time-lapse video of two building material specialists recreating the original fresco from an enormous number of fragments.

Katherine Bailey, a new volunteer and art graduate, led our craft activities. She created some clay fresco jigsaw puzzles that members had to put back together, initially without knowing what the originals looked like just like the specialists had had to do! This was an interesting, fun and informative exercise. Members also painted their own fresco panels that we put up on the walls of our "villa" to admire.

For our Christmas party in December we invited members to enrol in our 'Knight School'. We used part of a generous gift from much missed former assistant leader, Richard Gilpin, to hire the services of an experienced and very knowledgeable medieval squire, Will Ewart (enactor). Our budding knights learned about the duties of a squire, armour, weapons, clothing, and the do's and don'ts of medieval table manners. They learned some basic defence and attack sword moves and put them into action. For a craft activity we decorated plastic wine glasses to toast the memory of our patron.

Annie De Saulles

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EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

British Museum
Hawaii: A Kingdom Crossing Oceans
15th January 2026 - 25 May 2026
Daily 1000 - 1700 hours (Fridays to 20.30)
Advance booking recommended – see BM website
Room 35, The Joseph Hotung Great Court Gallery, Great Russell St, London, WC1B 3DG
Tickets: adults £15 with £2 donation / £14, seniors £14 (£7 after 12.00 Mondays), students and 16-18 years £12 (2-for-1 tickets on Fridays), under 16s free with adult ticket holder, jobseekers £12, disabled visitors £12 - for all other tickets prices check the BM website, members - free



Image: BM website

This exhibition brings together remarkable objects – both historic and contemporary. In 1824, the young King Liholiho and Queen Kamāmalu travelled across vast oceans on a journey that would mark a turning point in the history of their kingdom – Hawai'i. The exhibition commemorates over 200 years since this ill-fated royal visit and sheds light on Hawai'i's history and culture through an exploration of the complex and enduring relationship between the Hawaiian and British nations. The exhibition showcases seldom-seen international loans alongside the remarkable collection at the BM.

UCL Petrie Museum
University College London, Malet Place, London, WC1E 6BT
The Land Carries
Runs until 16 May 2026 Tuesdays - Fridays13.00 - 1700 hours and Saturdays 11.00 – 17.00 hours (Closed Sunday and Monday)
Free Event – open to all – no booking required
For more details : ucl.ac.uk/museums-collections/Petrie-museum

Journey through a reawakened exploration of Sudanese history, culture and nationhood through this display of contemporary art. The Land Carries brings together new work from three international artists, Ahmed Akasha (UK), Dina Nur Satti (USA) and Yasmin Elnour (Bahrain) responding to Sudanese material in the Petrie Museum of Egyptian and Sudanese Archaeology. The exhibition is part of the Sudan Living Cultures building hopeful futures through Sudan's material past. Working in partnership with academics, Sudanese individuals and communities in UK, Sudan and across multiple diasporas, artists and museum curators, Sudan Living Cultures aims to spotlight and reinterpret the Sudanese material heritage held in the Petrie Museum.

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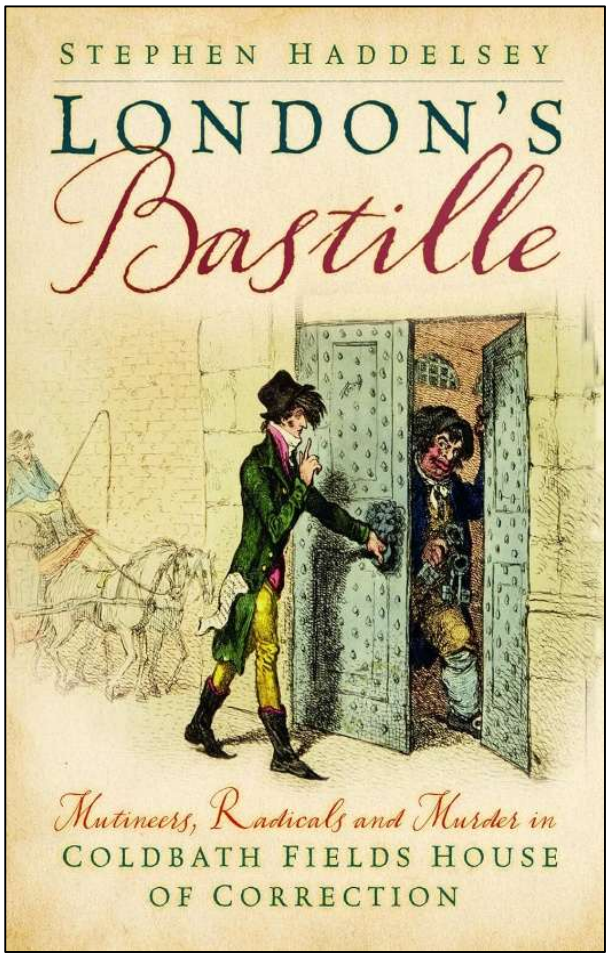
BOOK REVIEWS

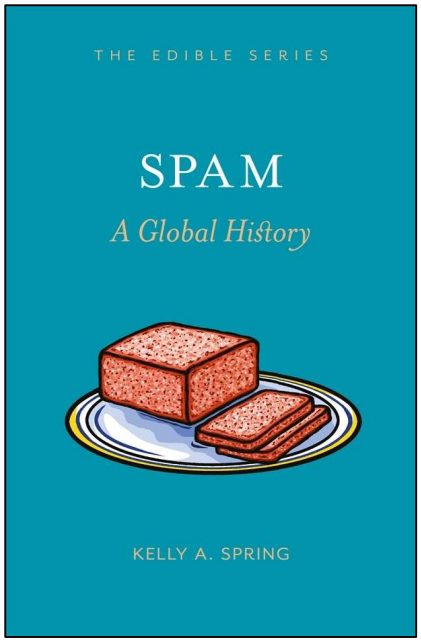
London's Bastille: Mutineers, Radicals and Murder in Coldbath Fields House of Correction by Stephen Haddelsey published by The History Press, 2025, ISBN: 0781803998879. Hardback RRP £20 but currently available at £15 on Amazon (9.1.2026).



London's Bastille is a gripping and meticulously researched history that brings Coldbath Fields House of Correction vividly to life. Stephen Haddelsey blends forensic scholarship with an engaging narrative style, transforming what could have been a niche institutional history into a compelling account of radical politics, social unrest, and the darker side of Georgian reform. The book's clarity and pace make it accessible without sacrificing depth, offering readers both rich context and striking human stories. Haddelsey excels at weaving together the political turbulence of the 1790s, the rise of British radicalism, and the grim realities of a prison that was meant to embody enlightened reform but instead became infamous for cruelty and injustice. 'The Steel' as the prison was locally and informally known became notorious with the reality of brutality becoming a paradox of 'model prison' and 'hellhole'.

Dr Haddelsey's portraits of inmates are vivid and empathetic, grounding the broader historical forces in memorable individual experiences. What makes the book especially rewarding is its ability to illuminate a little-known institution while revealing its profound significance in Britain's political and social evolution. Haddelsey's storytelling is enriched by fascinating anecdotes, sharp analysis, and a strong sense of place, making *London's Bastille* not just informative but genuinely enjoyable to read. It's a standout work for anyone interested in radical history, prison reform, or the turbulent final years of the eighteenth century.

SPAM, A Global History by Kelly A Spring published by Reaktion Books, 2025, ISBN: 9781836390664. Hardback RRP £12.99.



The recent *Food Glorious Food* LAMAS Local History conference held last November gave mention and memory to SPAM. Love it or hate it … if you are old enough, reading this book may remind you of SPAM fritters and school dinners, or perhaps it brings to mind the lampooning by Monty Python's Flying Circus when every dish on the menu contained SPAM. Kelly A Spring has produced this volume as part of the Edible Food Series which explores the rich history of cuisine, following on from such topics as Apple, Edible Flowers and Pickles. In this detailed account she tells the story, influenced by her own experiences travelling and living abroad, away from her home in U.S.A. She traces the early history of this product, produced from pork with ham kept fresh in its distinctive blue tin.

Born of the Great Depression in 1937 in Austin Minnesota SPAM is now sold worldwide in 48 countries. Kelly's book accounts for its success and its influence, starting with its origins in America with a German immigrant family, the grandparents and parents of George A Hormel who was the founder of what became the Hormel Corporation. She explains how attitudes to the product, varying in different countries, arose out of the circumstances of its introduction to the public and she provides interesting and detailed historical background. In England the reaction to SPAM is less positive than in the Pacific. The Lend Lease scheme from 1941 provided food, including SPAM to a war weary country and its connotation with rationing and deprivation has been hard to throw off.

The book traces how SPAM followed American troops at war and how it was viewed and used in war time and after; from a simple SPAM sandwich to Hawaiian SPAM Musubi. The height of its popularity can be seen perhaps in South Korea where today deluxe gift sets which contain SPAM are shared by Koreans as part of family celebrations and which can cost up to $100. The origin of its name is not clear – perhaps a portmanteau of 'spiced ham', or Spiced Pork and Ham, even Specially Processed American Meat, but what is clear that this very well researched book is enjoyable and enlightening and with recipes at the back you may be encouraged to experiment.

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AFFILIATED SOCIETY MEETINGS

Readers are advised to check with local societies if planning to attend lectures. Please check society websites.

Acton History Group

Meetings are held on the second Wednesday in the month at 7.30pm in St Mary's Parish Church Hall, Acton free for members, £2 for non-members. Contact email: actonhistorygroup@hotmail.com; website: www.actonhistory.co.uk

14 January 2026
TBC

11 February 2026
TBC

11 March 2026
TBC

Barking and District Historical Society

The final meeting of the Barking and District Historical Society took place in June 2025 at the end of its 90th anniversary season. The AGM failed to appoint a new chairperson and the committee made the decision to disband the society. The Society remains as a Facebook page.

Barnes and Mortlake History Society

Meetings are held on Thursdays at St Mary's Parish Church, Barnes, at 8pm unless otherwise stated below. Meetings are free for members (£5 for visitors).

For further details please contact the Hon. Secretary on 020 8878 3756 or visit us at www.barnes-history.org.uk

24 January 2026 at 2.30pm – All Saints Church, East Sheen
The Stargazer's Palace, Violet Moller

19 February 2026
Walls Have Ears: a secret life of spies, deception and British Intelligence, Helen Fry

19 March 2026 at 8.00pm – All Saints Church, East Sheen
Sheen House and the Home Guard, Richard White

16 April 2026
Vine Road homestead, the Barker family and market gardening, Mike Hildesley

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Barnet Museum and Local History Society

All meetings are held in St John the Baptist Church, Wood Street, Barnet at 3pm (unless otherwise stated) on Mondays (opposite the Museum). Lectures are free for members (£2 for visitors).
Contact Barnet Museum, 31 Wood Street, Barnet EN5 4BE (020 8440 8066) or visit: www.barnetmuseum.co.uk for more information.

9 February 2026
On the Beat in Kings Cross, Chris Foster

9 March 2026
Remembering Bungo: An appreciation of the life and career of Field Marshall Lord Byng of Vimy, William Frank

13 April 2026
What I did on my Holidays in 1892, Chris Hillier

11 May 2026
The Life and Times of Oscar Linkson Barnet FC, Manchester United and the Somme, Dennis Bird.

Bexley Archaeological Group

Talks are held at Bexley-Sidcup Conservative Club, 19 Station Road, Sidcup, DA15 7EB. Please arrive by 8pm for an 8.15pm start. For further information, please contact Clare Lodge: *Principal Field Officer and Public Relations Coordinator* – pr@bag.org.uk or visit our website www.bag.org.uk Register for all talks via the website. Non-members also welcome £5.

Note from the Editor: No talks/events are currently listed on the BAG website. Keep an eye out for the new calendar when posted.

Brentford and Chiswick Local History Society

The Society holds hybrid talks at the Chiswick Memorial Club, Bourne Place, W4 2EL and via Zoom. All talks are on the 3rd Monday of the month and begin at 7.30pm. Non-members are welcome and details of the talks will be available on the Society's website at https://brentfordandchiswicklhs.org.uk

11 April 2026 at Duke Street Church, Richmond.
Tickets £15 available online soon - 45th West London Local History Conference - **Shops on the High Street in the history of South & West London**

Bromley Borough Local History Society

The Society meets once a month from September to July, usually on the first Tuesday of the month. Meetings are held at 7.45pm in the Church Hall, St George's Church in Bickley Park Road, BR1 2BE. Non-members £2.00 contribution please. The Society's website is: www.bblhs.org.uk

3 February 2026
The Rookery, Bromley Common and Carshalton Park, two related garden landscapes of the 1720s, Andrew Skelton

3 March 2026
Bromley Workhouse's Female Guardians, Kate Hollis

7 April 2026 at 7.30pm AGM followed by
Exploring the history of the Priory, Orpington, Janet Clayton

5 May 2026
Sir Godfrey Hounsfield and the CT Scanner, Dr Adrian Thomas

Camden History Society

The Society normally holds meetings at 7.30pm on the 3rd Thursday of each month, except August. Non-members welcome at "in-person" events (£2); Zoom talks are for

CHS members only - some of which are recorded and can be watched by anyone via links on the website. For further information visit: www.camdenhistorysociety.org. Non-members are invited to join the Society.

19 February 2026 - Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, Holborn Library
Swiss at 60: an oral history project celebrating 60 years of Swiss Cottage Library

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Camden New Town History Group

Camden New Town is north of Camden Town in the London Borough of Camden. Meetings of this group of local residents are generally held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at the Irish Centre in Camden Square from 7pm.
email: maillist@camdennewtown.info; website: www.camdennewtown.info

12 February 2026 (note this is the 2nd Thursday)
Camden in the Age of Shakespeare, Tudor Allen

19 March 2026
Press Button B – The Phone Box, Lester Hillman

Chadwell Heath Historical Society

Meetings are held at 7.30pm from September to June. All meetings are held at the Baptist Church Hall, High Road, Chadwell Heath, RM6 6PP, a short walk from the Chadwell Heath Elizabeth Line station. Visitors welcome £3 pp. Enquiries: 020 8597 7210; email: chadwellheathhistsoc@hotmail.com
Facebook page at : https://www.facebook.com/chhistorical

17 February 2026
The Courtesan, the Princes and the Perfect Murder, Doreen Tayler

17 March 2026
Colourful Characters: the Contrasting Lives of Three Eighteenth Century Londoners, Christine Wagg

21 April 2026
London's Burning: the Great Fire of London 1666, Eleanor Bloom

19 May 2026
Wartime Havering, Ellen Owen

City of London Archaeological Society (COLAS)

Lectures are normally on the third Friday in every month and currently are via Zoom only, prior booking is required. Contact via the website www.colas.org.uk; email: colas_outreach@yahoo.co.uk

20 February 2026
The Serpent Column, Istanbul, Robin Densem

Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society

The Society holds a number of live events on a variety of topics at various locations and Zoom talks from October to April each year. Details can be found on their website at https://cnhss.co.uk/ The following live talks take place in the Small Hall at East Croydon United Reformed Church, 86 Addiscombe Grove, Croydon, CR0 5LP from 7.45pm unless otherwise stated. Non-members are welcome – we invite a small

donation of £3. Zoom talks for non-members require booking by emailing cnhss.info@gmail.com at least 24 hours before the lecture quoting the reference/s shown below.

9 February 2026 – via Zoom **Booking Ref: ZOOM WANDLE VISITOR**
The Wandle and its water, Mick Taylor

7 March 2026 at 2.30pm in the David Sweet Hall, ECURC
When Croydon was the Centre of the Universe, Will Noble

23 March 2026
Old London Bridge and its Houses, Dorian Gerhold

Edmonton Hundred Historical Society

Meetings are held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ, usually on the 3rd Wednesday of every month (except August) – occasional joint meetings with other societies may be on different days.

21 January 2026 at 3.00pm
TBC

The Eltham Society

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings take place at 7.00pm (for a 7.30pm start) at the Woodcroft Club, Eltham High Street. Non-members £2.00.
Email: contact@theelthamsociety.org.uk website: www.theelthamsociety.org.uk

5 February 2026
The Lost Houses of Oxleas Woods, Tom Wareham

5 March 2026 AGM followed by
The Courtaulds in Eltham Palace, David Sleep

25 March 2026 at 11.00am
A Visual Tour of Westminster Abbey, Hazel Beale

2 April 2026
TBC

7 May 2026
The Red Arrows, Guy Bartlett

Enfield Archaeological Society

Meetings are either held at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ (doors open at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start) or online via Zoom (indicated below) - the link will be available on the society website www.enfarchsoc.org the day before. Check the website for upcoming event details. Visitors welcome - £1.50.

13 February 2026
Roman Cemetery at Holborn Viaduct, Alex Blanks

13 March 2026 – AGM followed by
Summary of last year's excavations, Ian Jones and Martin Dearne, EAS

10 April 2026 via Zoom - Recent finds from Roman Vindolanda and Magna,
TBC

Friends of Bruce Castle Museum and Park

Friends of Bruce Castle Evening talks usually take place on the last Wednesday of the month, 7.00pm for 7.30pm start. Munch and Listen talks are usually on the last Monday of the month, 12.00pm for 12.15pm start. Talks are free and open to all (tea/coffee is available for a small charge).
Please see website for details: https://www.brucecastle.org/whats-on/talks
Talks are generally a hybrid combination of actual and virtual, via Zoom link. Both actual and virtual attendance should be booked in advance unless otherwise stated.
Details of the programme are available from the website:
https://www.brucecastle.org/whats-on/talks or phone Bruce Castle Museum (020 8489 4250). Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU. Car park on site. (SATNAV for car park N17 7AA entrance on Church Lane).

Note from the Editor: No events are currently listed on the website. But do keep an eye out for listings as they are posted.

The Friends of Hackney Archives

The Friends are based at Hackney Archives, Dalston Square, London E8 3BQ and put on at least three events per year for people with an interest in Hackney's and London's history. These include talks, visits and walks, and provide an opportunity to meet members of the Friends and others who share an interest in the history of Hackney. Please see our website for further information, including Events and How to Join, and access to publications of Hackney's history: **www.hackneyhistory.org** Email us: hackneyhistory@gmail.com

Editor's Note: winter/spring 2026 programme not currently detailed/updated on the society website.

The Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery

For information about the activities of Friends of Kensal Green Cemetery, email: fokgc@hotmail.com website: www.kensalgreen.co.uk
All events require booking via the website. Ticket prices vary according to the event but all income helps the Friends to restore monuments, study the cemetery and attract visitors to Kensal Green.

Editor's Note: Keep an eye on the website for upcoming events and Tour Dates.

Friern Barnet & District Local History Society

Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month (no meetings in July and August) at The North Middlesex Golf Club, The Manor House, Friern Barnet Lane, Whetstone N20 0NL, starting at 7.45pm for 8.00pm. Non-members are welcome (£2). Refreshments are available.
Email: friern-barnethistory@hotmail.co.uk : website: www.friern-barnethistory.org.uk
For further details contact Patricia Berguer on 020 8368 8314.

28 January 2026
London Colney Airfield, Guy Thomas

25 February 2026
Chicken Shed Theatre History, Adam Blackwell

25 March 2026
London Underground Architecture, Mark Andrew Pardoe

22 April 2026 - TBA

The Hackney Society

The Society organises a wide range of walks, talks and guided tours during the year – details and tickets can be found on their Eventbrite page.

7 February 2026 – 1.00pm – 4.00pm Hackney Archives
Wikipedia Editing Workshop – tickets and details at
https://www.tickettailor.com/events/hackneyhistoryfestival/1978509

7 March 2026 – 1.00pm – 4.00pm Hackney Archives
Wikipedia Editing Workshop – tickets and details at
https://www.tickettailor.com/events/hackneyhistoryfestival/1978511

Hayes & Harlington Local History Society

Most meetings are held at Botwell Green Library, Leisure Centre, East Avenue, Hayes UB3 3HW on the third Tuesday of the month. Times vary according to the season. Non-members are welcome.
Further information from Mr Robin Brown, 107 Wentworth Crescent, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 1NP (020 8848 7959).
Email: hayescanal@hotmail.co.uk

Note from the Editor: The website and also the person listed for contact details so not appear to be live at the moment (January 2026).

Hendon & District Archaeological Society

Lectures are held on Tuesdays in the Drawing Room, Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley, N3 3QE, and start promptly at 8.00 pm, with coffee / tea afterwards (cash only). Non-members admission: £2. Buses 13, 125, 143, 326 & 460 pass nearby, and Finchley Central station (Northern Line) is a 5-10 minute walk away.
For further information see the website: www.hadas.org.uk

10 February 2026
Great archaeological discoveries and great archaeologists of France: Alexandre du Mège: a founder of archaeological research in France – or rogue? Léon Joulin: an outstanding intellect and a founder of modern archaeology. Émile Chénon: a leading nineteenth century lawyer with a love for archaeology. Sophie Krausz: in the forefront of twenty-first century archaeology and museum presentation, Dr James Bromwich

10 March 2026
Archaeological material evidence from bricks to gold, Les Capon

14 April 2026
Barnet Banner and the Battle – People of the War of the Roses, Scott Harrison

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Hornsey Historical Society

Lecture meetings are held at the Union Church Hall, corner of Ferme Park Road and Weston Park, starting at 7.00pm. A donation of £2.00 is requested from non-members. For further information please ring The Old Schoolhouse (020 8348 8429); write to the Society at 136 Tottenham Lane N8 7EL; website: www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk

22 January 2026
Tower Gardens Cottage Estate: A Resident's Perspective, Ruth Crowley

11 March 2026
Mavericks, Nick Higham

Hounslow and District History Society

Meetings held in person are at the McCrea Hall, Hounslow United Reform Church (114 Hanworth Road, Hounslow, on the corner of Chapel Road, TW3 1UF) on the last Tuesday of the month or on Zoom (see below) and commence at 7.30.pm. Non-members visiting are invited to pay £2.00 at the door.

Non-members who wish to be added to the society's Zoom log-in list for a particular talk should contact James Marshall at ajmarshall54@gmail.com

27 January 2026 via Zoom
Thames Islands, Nick Pollard

24 February 2026 via Zoom
Devotion, Lust and an Exploding King – Stories of Love and Death at Syon House, Howard Simmons

24 March 2026
Strawberry Hill House, Nevil Tomlinson

28 April 2026 AGM followed by
JMW Turner's Local Connections, Christine Diwell

Leyton and Leytonstone Historical Society

Meetings are generally on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.45pm in St John's Church Hall, off High Road Leytonstone (between the new Aldi and the church), E11 1HH. Free to members, non-members pay £2.00. Doors open 7.15pm (refreshments available for a small donation).

For more information see the website at http://www.leytonhistorysociety.org.uk/events.html or contact Maureen Measure - email measure@btinternet.com

21 January 2026
My Year in Archaeology, Les Capon

18 February 2026
Living the Change – Lea Bridge, Russell Boyce

18 March 2026
Painters, Punks and Protesters – Women of Leyton and Leytonstone, Caryle Web-Ingall

15 April 2026
Stories from the East End, Eleanor Bloom

20 May 2026 AGM followed by
The Art of Laundry, Nick Higham

London Natural History Society

The LNHS Virtual Natural History Talk series will take place fortnightly at 7.00pm. All of the talks are free to everyone and they are recorded and uploaded to the LNHS YouTube channel afterwards. **Booking is essential** at: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/london-natural-history-society-30790245484
For a full range of Natural History talks see the website above

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Merton Historical Society

Meetings are held monthly from October until April at 2.30pm on Saturday afternoons at St James' Church Hall, Martin Way, Merton.
For further information please contact the Honorary Secretary, Mrs Rosemary Turner, 27 Burley Close, London SW16 4QQ, mhs@mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk or www.mertonhistoricalsociety.org.uk

14 February 2026
Celebrating Merton Historical Society's 75th Birthday

14 March 2026
Sir Patrick Kelly, a story that starts in Ireland, moves to Mumbai and ends in Wimbledon, Geoff Simmons

11 April 2026
Richardson Evans, conservation pioneer, local campaigner and benefactor, Michael Norman Smith

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The Norwood Society

Local history talks are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month at 7.30pm at the Upper Norwood Library, Westow Hill SE19 1TJ. Entry is free, but a donation of £3 towards the cost of tea and homemade cakes would be much appreciated. Booking can be made in advance via Eventbrite. For all enquiries, please contact Ruth Hibberd at: membership@norwoodsociety.co.uk or visit the website: www.norwoodsociety.co.uk

19 February 2026
The Slums of Lower Norwood, Francis Howcutt

Orpington and District Archaeological Society

Meetings are held in Christ Church (United Reformed), Tudor Way, Petts Wood, BR5 1LH on the first Wednesday of each month (except August and January when the talks are online via Zoom) from 8.00pm unless stated differently below. Non-members are welcome to attend (£3 donation) but please check the website at : www.odas.org.uk before attending in case of last-minute changes.

For further information please contact Michael Meekums or Janet Clayton (020 8302 1572).

4 February 2026
What's the 'moat-ivation'?, Alexis Haslam, Community Archaeologist, Fulham Palace

4 March 2026
Landscapes, monuments and visibility in early Neolithic Kent, Dr Alastair Oswald, English Heritage

1 April 2026
The massive Melsonby Iron Age hoard: from bits of bits, to wheels and wagons, Dr Sophia Adams, Curator, First Millennium European and Roman Conquest Period Collections, Department of Britain, Europe and Prehistory, British Museum

6 May 2026
Women and the Royal Archaeological Institute, Nathalie Cohen, Archaeologist for London and the South East, National Trust

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Pinner Local History Society

All meetings start at 8.00pm. Main meetings take place in the Village Hall, Pinner. Visitors are welcome for a donation of £3. For further information please contact: Janet Brooks, 33 Holwell Place, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 1DX (020 8429 1337 and 07980 366845), website: www.pinnerlhs.org.uk

5 February 2026
Battle of Britain House, Ruislip, Evan Panagopoulos

5 March 2026
Educating Pinner – the Story of Pinner Schools, *Research Group Presentation*

9 April 2026
Codebreaking, Intelligence, and The Impact of the Americans during WW2 at Eastcote, Ronald Koorm

7 May 2026 at Pinner Parish Church Hall, Church Lane, Pinner HA5 3AA (includes AGM)
A Brief history of Pinner Parish Church, St John the Baptist, Reverend Mark Arnold

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Richmond Archaeological Society

Talks are held at the Richmond Library Annexe, Quadrant Rd, Richmond TW9 1DH, usually on the second Friday in the month. Doors open 7.30 for 8.00pm start. Some lectures will be via Zoom (indicated below) and internet connections and the Zoom setup can be checked from 7.45pm before the start.

Members will be emailed by the treasurer and membership secretary, Stephen Alexander (alexander.stephen@gmail.com) in advance with the talk and link, if Zoom. Non-members are welcome and should email him before each lecture.

For information on how to join the online lectures please visit the website: www.richmondarchaeology.org.uk or email: richmond.archaeology@gmail.com

13 February 2026
The Mersea Island Project, Oliver Hutchinson, Project Officer, Museum of London Archaeology

13 March 2026
The Rise and Fall of Richmond Palace, Mark Lucas

10 April 2026 – TBA

8 May 2026 - TBA

Richmond Local History Society

Meetings are held on Mondays, if possible, at Duke Street Church, Richmond, TW9 1DH at 8.00pm. The venue is 5 minutes from Richmond Station and there is parking on Richmond Green Visitors £5.00. All talks are live streamed via Zoom – see website for joining details. For further information email: membership@richmondhistory.org.uk website: http://www.richmondhistory.org.uk

9 February 2026
Venetian river fetes, Andrew George

9 March 2026
Richmond and the suffragettes, Lisa Barry-Waite and Mari Takayangi

13 April 2026
Richmond's links to {Revolutionary] America, Simon Targett

18 May 2026 AGM followed by **Short Talks**

Rotherhithe & Bermondsey Local History Society

The series of lectures below will take place at the Norwegian Church, 12 Albion Street, SE16 7LN and begin at 7.30pm. Booking is not required unless stated below. For more information please visit the website: www.rbhistory.org.uk

28 January 2026
Watermen's Stairs, David Sweetland

25 February 2026
TBC

25 March 2026
TBC

29 April 2026
TBC

27 May 2026
TBC

Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society

Meetings will be held on usually the third Tuesday of each month at 8.00pm at St Martins Church Hall, High Street, Ruislip. Visitors are welcome (**£3** admission). For further information about the activities of the Society and updates about our plans for meetings please contact the Membership Secretary (membership@rnelhs.uk) or visit our website www.RNELHS.org.uk

20 January 2026
Sir Joseph Bazalgette and the Great Stink, Stephen Fielding, Heritage Programme Manager, Habitats & Heritage Trust

17 February 2026
Grim's Dyke: the story of a house and its inhabitants, Claudia Merck**,** Guide at Grim's Dyke House and Gardens

17 March 2026
Ruislip in the Boer War, Melanie Winterbotham**,** RNELHS Research Group Leader and Journal Editor

21 April 2026
Breakspear: The English Pope, Adrian Waddingham**,** Author and Historian

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Southgate District Civic Voice

We are a civic society in the western half of the London Borough of Enfield, which covers Southgate, Southgate Green, Cockfosters, New Southgate, Oakwood, Palmers Green and Winchmore Hill. Open Meetings are normally held twice a year in the Walker Lower Hall, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG. Non-members are welcome (£5 admission including booking fee). **Please visit the website for information on how to register for events.**
For further information visit our website: www.southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org or email us on info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

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Southwark & Lambeth Archaeological Society

Lectures are held monthly on the second Tuesday at 7.30pm at the Housing Cooperative, 106 The Cut SE1, (direct entrance from the raised walkway), almost opposite the Old Vic. Visitors are welcome but are asked to contribute £1 towards expenses. For further details please contact Richard Buchanan, 79 Ashridge Crescent, Shooter's Hill, London SE18 3EA : email: RichardJBuchanan@aol.com
For enquiries please call 020 8764 8314.

10 February 2026
TBA

10 March 2026
Archaeology in Southwark, Chris Constable

14 April 2026 – not currently scheduled due to the Easter Bank Holiday

11 May 2026
London before Londinium, Craig Campbell

Spelthorne Archaeology and Local History Group

Talks start at 8.00pm. Members free, non-members welcome (£2 admission). For further details please contact Nick Pollard (01932 564585):
Email curator@spelthornemuseum.org.uk : website www.spelthornemuseum.org.uk
For further details and venue please check our website.

5 March 2026 Venue: Staines Methodist Church
The Ice Age in Greater London, Dr Matt Pope

2 April 2026 Venue: Fordbridge Centre, Ashford
The History of Ashford County School, Nick Pollard

14 May 2026 Venue: Staines Methodist Church
AGM followed by short talk.

The Thorney Island Society

The Society organises talks and visits to places of interest in the Westminster area throughout the year. Non-members welcome although some visits are for members only. **Booking essential**.
See website at https://thethorneyislandsociety.org.uk/ttis/index.php for details of how to book or email info@thethorneyislandsociety.org.uk

Editor's note: Nothing currently listed for the 2026 programme.

Borough of Twickenham Local History Society

Lectures are held at St Mary's Church Hall, Church Street, Twickenham, at 8.00pm on the first Monday of each month from October to May. Guests are welcome (£4.00).

For further information please visit our website: www.botlhs.co.uk

2 February 2026
Gardens and People of Twickenham Park, Andrew George (BOTLHS)

2 March 2026
100 Years of the West Middlesex Hospital, Christine Diwell (BOTLHS)

13 April 2026
Sir Richard Burton – Explorer of the Nile, Tharik Hussain (Habitats and Heritage)

11 May 2026 AGM followed by – **TBC**

Uxbridge Local History and Archive Society

All meetings take place at Christ Church, Redford Way (off Belmont Road), Uxbridge, UB8 1SZ.
For further information please contact Nicholas Schofield, The Presbytery, Osborn Road, Uxbridge, UB8 1UE; Email njschofield@hotmail.com

20 January 2026 - 2.30pm
Unseen Local Photographs, Ken Pearce

17 February 2026 - 7.30pm
The Uxbridge Yeomanry Cavalry, Lt-Col (ret'd) Mike Lansdown

17 March 2026 - 7.30pm
British Slavery and Abolition in Hillingdon & Uxbridge, Dr Inge Dornan

21 April 2026 - 7.30pm - AGM followed by
Blooming Uxbridge: The Story of the Biggest Cut-Flower Nursery in the UK, Tony Mitchell

19 May 2026 - 7.30pm
Mercenary River: Private Greed, Public Good: A History of London's Water, Nick Higham (former BBC correspondent)

Walthamstow Historical Society

Talks take place on Thursdays in St Saviour's Church, Markhouse Road, Walthamstow E17 8EP (15 mins walk from St James Street Station). Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.45pm start. Visitors welcome (£2). Zoom links will be sent out before the meeting – non-members wishing to attend please email**:** whsmembershipsec@gmail.com

Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/walthamstowhs/events

*Editor's not*e: nothing listed for upcoming events (January 2026).

Wandsworth Historical Society

Meetings held either via Zoom or at the Friends' Meeting House, Wandsworth High Street (opposite Town Hall) on the last Friday of the month at 8.00pm until 9.15pm – as indicated below. Bookings for Zoom talks can be made by emailing: whsevents@wandsworthhistory.org.uk. Booking not required for live talks and all are free of charge. For more information visit the website: www.wandsworthhistory.org.uk

30 January 2026 via Zoom **16th Nick Fuentes Memorial Lecture**
The Roman River Finds Project, Hella Eckardt and Philippa Walton, Reading University

27 February 2026 via Zoom
Reconstructing the map of London on the eve of the Great Fire of 1666, Vanessa Harding, historian of medieval, Tudor and Stuart London

27 March 2026
Preserving Wandsworth's Legacy: Developments in the Wandsworth Heritage Collection, Antia Dona, Culture and Heritage Programmer, Wandsworth Council

24 April 2026
Wandsworth's nineteenth-century street name plates: design, policy and controversy, Simon Morris, Publications Secretary of the London Topographical Society

29 May 2026
The Changing Face of Wandsworth: from industry to homes, Mick Taylor, Wandle Industrial Museum

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The Whitechapel Society

The Society was originally set up to study the murders of Jack the Ripper, but its remit has widened to cover all aspects of late Victorian and Early Edwardian East End social history. The Society holds meetings every 2 months at the Crutched Friar pub, 39-41 Crutched Friars, London EC3N 2AE. Doors open 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start. Non-members £5.00. Full details can be found on our website www.whitechapelsociety.com and our Facebook page "The Whitechapel Society 1888".

7 February 2026
Jack the Ripper and Agatha Christie's ABC Murders, Dr Jonathan Oates

4 April 2026
TBC

Willesden Local History Society

The Society meets on Wednesdays from September to June at 7.30pm in St Mary's Parish Centre, which is in Neasden Lane adjacent to the churchyard. Non-members welcome. For further information please contact the Secretary, Margaret Pratt, 51 West Ella Road, London NW10 9PT (020 8965 7230).
Website: www.willesden-local-history.co.uk *Editor's note*: No 2026 events listed (January 2026).

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