

Commentary

By GROMATICUS

THE APPOINTMENT of Brian Hobley as Chief Urban Archaeologist at Guildhall Museum (p.105) opens a new era for the City. Many people will watch with interest as to how the new broom sweeps. Certainly two of his initial moves, the appointing of an archivist and a declaration on publication, will be greeted by local archaeologists with favour, if not with fervour.

The enormous publication backlog of City excavations has obviously an inter-relating effect with much of the other work carried out in the rest of London. Since the discovery of a late 5th century amphora sherd in a stokehole of the Billingsgate town house prompted a search for, and discovery of, other examples in Guildhall Museum's collections, the publication, even an interim one, of these

sherds might produce further examples elsewhere in the London region. Some sites, such as that containing the small freestanding Roman building with an adjacent north/south road — a little to the east of Billingsgate, have not even received a summary publication.

However with two of the four major excavations of 1972 already published in the 1973 *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society* and already reissued in offprint form by the "Department of Urban Archaeology, Guildhall Museum", hopes must be high for the future.

I am sure that all readers of the *London Archaeologist* must wish Brian Hobley well in his new post and must hope for an improvement in the shape of things to come.

Increase in Subscription Rate

A RISING accumulated deficit in the finances of the magazine has caused great concern to the Publication Committee of the London Archaeologist Association. Although successful attempts have been made to increase the circulation of the *London Archaeologist*, they have unfortunately been offset by inflation; apart from rising printing costs, there have been three increases in the postal rates since the magazine was issued in 1969 — at the moment the postage on a magazine is 4p which leaves only 11p to meet printing and other costs.

The following table shows the annual surplus/deficit as recorded in the audited accounts:

1969	—	£65
1970	+	£5
1971	—	£21
1972	—	£66

Since the deficit for 1973 is expected to be even greater than that for 1972, a rise in the subscription rate is essential.

An increased annual rate of 80p was first considered, but the Publication Committee wished to make a number of improvements to the *London Archaeologist*, including an increase in the number of pages — this issue has an extra four, bringing the magazine in line with *Current Archaeology*.

After lengthy deliberations it was decided to raise the annual subscription rate to £1 (or individual copies to 25p); this decision was formally ratified by the Annual General Meeting on the 18th May 1973 as reported in the Summer issue (p.72).

The Committee had originally hoped to introduce the increased rate with effect from December 1972, but the 'freeze' and other factors militated against this. However despite this postponement, well over one hundred readers very kindly either sent in the new rate of £1 or made a donation, for which the Publication Committee would like to express its warm appreciation.

One result of the decision to implement the increased subscription rate is that it has been possible to have Vol. 1 No. 14 reprinted. This issue which includes articles on Baynards Castle (2 pages), the Council for British Archaeology, the Lyric Opera House, Roman Brockley Hill, Saxon Settlements south of the Thames and the Saxon London Bridge, has been out of print since the autumn bank holiday of 1972; it sold out to some of the 4,000 visitors to the Baynards Castle site. Because of the expense of having only a limited number reprinted (by lithography but still with a green cover and on the same quality paper), it has been necessary to fix the price at 35p including postage.