

## Another surprise from Southwark

The Tabard Square site in Southwark, where excavations by Pre-Construct Archaeology have already uncovered a stone plaque inscribed with London's Roman name (see *London Archaeol* 10, no. 3 (Winter 2002) p. 84 for the find, and this year's *Round-up*, Supplement 2, p. 53, for details of the site), produced another surprise with the discovery in July of a sealed Roman metal box containing cream. The circular box, which is 6 cm in diameter and 5 cm high, was found in a Roman drain close to a temple complex. The cream, which still showed finger marks, may be cosmetic, medicinal, or ritualistic; the outcome of its analysis is awaited.

The religious complex is the first to be found in London. There are two square Romano-Celtic temples, together with a possible guest house, all enclosed within a precinct. The stone temple buildings were about 11 m square and date from around the mid-2nd century AD. Between the buildings was a large area suitable for mass outdoor gatherings. Three plinths, probably for statuary, formed the fourth side of the courtyard. A larger-than-life bronze finger, a bronze foot and several pieces of stone sculpture are all that remain of the statues. The inscription was found near the heart of the precinct. (Information from Nansi Rosenberg of consultants E C Harris).

## Gate to prehistory at Terminal 5

Framework Archaeology has recently completed the largest single archaeological excavation (100 ha) in the UK at the Terminal 5 site of Heathrow Airport.<sup>1</sup> It revealed evidence from the Mesolithic period through to the present day, and charted changes in the landscape from 6000 BC. These include the transition from a heavily-wooded landscape in the Mesolithic to large ceremonial pathways in the Neolithic, a small settlement with fields and boundaries in the Early Bronze Age, and a small Iron Age and Roman village. Settlement died out at the end of the Roman period, but another appeared in the mid-12th century. Some of the Bronze Age boundaries were still in use in the 20th century.

Notable artefacts included the only wooden bowl found dating from the Middle Bronze Age (1500

to 1100 BC), one of only two wooden buckets from the same period, and a log ladder leading down into a pit dug in the Middle Bronze Age containing a wooden axe haft and a Neolithic stone axe, itself 2000 years old when it was placed there. Two beautiful Iron Age pottery cups were also found. (Information from Tony Trueman, Framework Archaeology).

## New framework for research

The long-awaited document *Research Framework for London Archaeology* was launched by the Deputy Mayor of London, English Heritage and the Museum of London in July. It has taken four years to develop, and seeks to create both a focus for future research and a framework into which new discoveries made in the course of development can be fitted. It highlights the importance of the finds and records of over 5000 excavations stored at the LAARC as a resource in their own right as well as a way of making sense of future discoveries. It sees itself and the LAARC as a way of involving more Londoners in the study of London's past. We hope to feature a review in a future issue.

## New Archaeology magazine

The magazine *Current World Archaeology* was launched on 19 September. It seeks to do for world archaeology what its parent magazine, *Current Archaeology*, has sought to do for British Archaeology for the last 35 years, to provide an accessible but authoritative account of recent archaeological discoveries and their implications. It will be published six times a year for a subscription of £20 (or £18 if paying by Direct Debit). Many of our readers will have already received publicity about the magazine, but if you have not, you can order a free copy of the first issue by 'phoning (020) 7435 7517 in office hours, or from [www.archaeology.co.uk](http://www.archaeology.co.uk).

## Portal to the past

*Pastscape* is a new prototype online service from English Heritage, providing access to the National Monuments Record's heritage database. It can be accessed at [www.pastscape.org](http://www.pastscape.org).

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1. Earlier work was reported by J. C. Barrett, J. S. C. Lewis and K. Welsh 'Perry Oaks – a history of inhabitation' *London Archaeol* 9, no. 7 (2000) 195-9 and J. C. Barrett, J. S. C. Lewis and K. Welsh 'Perry Oaks – a history of inhabitation, part 2' *London Archaeol* 9, no. 8 (2001) 221-7.