

Mosaic

Restoration of the Lower Orangery Garden of Hampton Court

Hampton Court Palaces Garden and Estates team have begun restoration work on the Lower Orangery Garden, complete with its exotic plant collection, to recreate the displays first introduced some 300 years ago by William III and Mary II. The work, due for completion this summer, will be partly funded by the 2007 Royal Horticultural Society Hampton Court Palace Flower Show Gala.

There are no other surviving 17th-century gardens in the world displaying exotics in this manner. The restoration of the Lower Orangery Garden will confirm that the gardens at Hampton Court Palace are amongst the best presented, landscaped and historically significant in Europe.

The re-introduction of the Lower Orangery Garden was inspired by the restoration of Hampton Court's Privy Garden in 1995, where exotic plants were a key element of the layout. Since 1987 the Gardens and Estates team and curators at Hampton Court Palace have been researching the Lower Orangery Garden – formally known as the 'Greenhouse Quarter'. They used contemporary accounts, plant lists, maps, documents and pictures, plus recent archaeological digs, to confirm the exact layout of the garden. The exotics themselves have been collected and propagated with the help of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and developing partnerships, with local nurseries and British and European suppliers.

In 1689, following their accession to the throne, William III and Mary II made Hampton Court Palace their favoured home. As keen gardeners and plant collectors, they began to assemble one of the finest botanical collections in the world, a precursor to that of Kew Gardens, founded some 70 years later. Queen Mary, in particular, loved exotics from the Mediterranean, Virginia, Mauritius and the New World, and it was these she displayed at Hampton Court Palace, sparking off a trend amongst the social elite. Her collection included 2,000 different species, including 1,000 orange trees (the symbol of the House of Orange dynasty from which William descended). So large was the collection it needed a full time botanist, Dr Leonard Plukenet was employed to maintain and document it.

Following the death of William III in 1702, the exotics collection was maintained by subsequent monarchs until the reign of King George III. By 1760, when Hampton Court Palace was no longer used as a royal residence, much of the now unfashionable exotics collection had been moved to Kew. Remnants of the collection survived, and there is evidence of orange trees being displayed at Hampton Court Palace into the early 20th century. The collection finally died out during WW1, as the war effort and lack of manpower meant relevant care and attention was not available.

London's Burning

London's Burning – the Great Fire of London 1666 is a new exhibition at Museum of London, which opened on 16 March 2007; it takes the most

famous disaster in London's history and tells its story through the voices of those who lived through it. We may be familiar with facts of the fire itself, but what do we know about these people who lived through the terror of having their homes and livelihood destroyed? How did they cope? What happened to them afterwards? Focusing on eye-witness accounts, London's Burning will reveal the personal side of the tragedy: Samuel Pepys rescuing his bags of gold at 4 am in his nightshirt; Elizabeth Peacock and her 3 children being left with 'not so much as a stool to sit upon' and the boys of Westminster School who helped fight the fire. The exhibition explores why a fire which claimed less than 10 lives, scarred London as surely as the Great Plague the year before, which claimed 100,000.

A video installation will transport visitors back to the streets of 17th-century London, and let them experience how a bustling city, full of merchants, traders and craft workers, collapsed into ruins, and let them hear from Londoners left to pick through the debris of their lives. Interactive displays and questions will allow children to engage with the story and think about how the fire changed the lives of Londoners and the city they lived in.

A wide range of contemporary objects bear testimony to the strength of the fire and the desperate and futile efforts made to quell the blaze. A 17th-century oven matching the likely culprit for the fire's origin in Pudding Lane is on display, next to the hopelessly ineffectual fire-fighting equipment of the day. The panic which enveloped the city's residents can be read in these paltry squirters and hooks, which would have been utterly useless against a furnace which reached some 1000°C. Archaeological finds from a building which stood two doors from the origin of the fire on Pudding Lane give a physical record of an episode which literally scorched itself into the fabric of the city.

Continuity at St Martin's-in-the-Fields

Recent work at St Martin's by MoLAS has revealed significant finds from the late Roman and early Saxon periods. A limestone coffin contained the bones of a middle-aged man, dated by radiocarbon to around 410 AD. Nearby was a tile kiln dated by archaeomagnetism to AD 400–450; the first tile kiln to be found in central London and the latest dated structure from Roman London yet to be found. Beneath and alongside the church was a Saxon burial with a silver ring, a blue glass cup and a hanging bowl with enamelled escutcheons. Amethyst and glass beads, and a gold pendant with a blue glass setting, seem to mark the position of another grave. These seem to date to the mid-600s, just as *Lundenwic* was becoming established.

Gresham Street temple

MoLAS excavations at Gresham Street have revealed the near-complete ground plan of a small rectangular Roman temple of 2nd- or 3rd-century date. Foundations, floors and some superstructure of the inner *cella* and surrounding ambulatory were

found, including a very thick flint foundation which may have supported a statue or altar.

London's best Roman wall plaster of the decade

Stunning examples of Roman painted wall plaster dating from the Hadrianic period have just been excavated by MoLAS on a small site at Lime House, east of the Roman forum basilica (see front cover). The large fragments form parts of a fallen wall with panels containing colourful and finely detailed grapes, birds, flowers, mythical figures, swags and vegetation. Apparently demolished after a fire, the building also featured a tessellated floor from which a mosaic had been robbed out.

Support for the Survey of London

The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, an educational charity established to promote and support the study of the history of British art and architecture, has agreed to provide English Heritage with financial support for the publication of the Survey of London for an initial term of five years. The next volumes of the Survey will be on Clerkenwell, an architecturally diverse area. They will be published by Yale University Press. (Source: Society of Antiquaries Online Newsletter)

Temple of Mithras to be listed

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport has announced that London's Temple of Mithras is to be listed as Grade II. Discovered in 1954, the 3rd-century Mithraeum was one of the most important archaeological finds of the era. The temple remains were moved in the 1960s to their present location at Bucklersbury House. Now that the area is to be redeveloped, there are plans to reconstruct the temple in its original site on Walbrook.

Borough Market under threat

The Department of Transport and the Department for Communities and Local Government have given permission and legal powers to Network Rail to build an additional viaduct through the Borough Market area. It will destroy many buildings in this vibrant community, and will impact seriously on the archaeology of north Southwark.

New historical map service

A new historical map and data service has been launched by GroundSure. The result of over two years' research and development, it marks the first major advancement in environmental mapping since 1995, setting new standards in quality, accuracy and clarity. Over 250 people have been involved in the development of the service, and about 800,000 maps have been scanned. For further information, visit www.groundsure.com.

Diary

May

2 (8 p.m.) Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society. 'Great British Seaside' by Brian Bloice. St Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell.

8 (7.30 p.m.) Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society. 'Excavations at St George the Martyr, Southwark' by Bruce Watson. The Housing Co-op Hall, 106 The Cut, London SE1.

8 (8 p.m.) Hendon and District Archaeological Society 'Trams of North-West London' by David Berger. Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley N3.

10 (8 p.m.) Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society. 'London's water supply' by Ron Howes. Upper Hall, United Reformed Church, Eden Street, Kingston.

11 (8 p.m.) Richmond Archaeological Society. 'The Archaeology of Buckingham Palace' by Jonathan Foyle. Followed by AGM. Vestry Hall, Paradise Road, Richmond.

14 (8 p.m.) West Essex Archaeological Group. 'The Roman Circus at Colchester' by Philip Crummy. Assembly Hall, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green.

16 (8 p.m.) Clapham Society. 'Shakespeare's Rose and Globe' by Iain Mackintosh. Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, Clapham.

17 (6.30 p.m.) London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. 'A History of the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries' by Dee Cook. Terrace Room, Museum of London.

20 (8 p.m.) Enfield Archaeological Society. Excavations and Fieldwork of the Society in 2006 and AGM. Jubilee Hall, junction of Chase Side and Parsonage Lane, Enfield.

June

6 (8 p.m.) Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society. 'The Pre-Raphaelites' by Iain McKillop. St Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell.

11 (8 p.m.) West Essex Archaeological Group. 'Petra – that Rose Red City' by Walter Loebel. The Sixth Form Unit, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green.

Courses

Birkbeck College offers a wide range of five-day practical courses and Study Days, and a summer training excavation at Syon House from 11 June until 13 July 2007. Fee: £185 per week. There will also be a Recording of Standing Buildings course w/c 18 June and an Environmental Archaeology Course w/c 25 June. For details contact Natalie Ping on 020 7631 6627, n.ping@bbk.ac.uk or www.bbk.ac.uk/ce/archaeology.

West Essex Archaeological Group offer training digs at Copped Hall, near Epping, from 5–11, 12–18 and 19–25 August. Details from Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Road, Epping, Essex CM16 5HW, tel. 01992 813 725, email PMD2@ukonline.co.uk.

Day School

Tribute to Adrian Gibson (timber building expert), Saturday 28 July at Cressing Temple Barns, Braintree, Essex. By Essex Historic Buildings Group with Herts & Essex Architectural Research Society. Cost £20 plus £7.50 for lunch. Details and bookings from Ian Greenfield, Yew Tree Cottage, Stanbrook, Thaxted, Essex CM6 2NL (tel. 01371 830 416).

Events

Amphitheatre visits: a chance to see the excavated remains of London's Roman amphitheatre with a Museum of London guide. Thursday 24 May, Tuesday 19 June, Wednesday 18 July, Thursday 23 August, 2.30 to 3.30 p.m. Costs £5 (concessions £3). Phone 0870 444 3850 to book.

Fort gate visits: explore the remains of the Roman fort. Wednesday 16 May, Thursday 14 June, Tuesday 17 July, Wednesday 15 August, 11 to 11.30 a.m. and 12 to 12.30 p.m., from the Museum of London.

National Archaeology Week: Home Sweet Home, Roman style. At the Museum of London, Saturday 21 July, 11 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Sunday 22 July, 12.30 to 5 p.m.

Summer Schools

Birkbeck College are introducing two Summer Schools to the Archaeology Programme, 'Revealing Roman Britain' Monday 21–Friday 25 May and 'Revealing Prehistoric Britain' Monday 28–Friday 1 June.

Membership

Individual membership of the Council for British Archaeology, which includes six issues a year of British Archaeology, costs £32 p.a.; payment should be sent to C.B.A., St Mary's House, Bootham, York, YO30 7BZ (01904 671 417).

Practical archaeology

London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre. Contact Archive Manager, Roy Stephenson (020 7566 9317).

Croydon & District. Enquiries to Jim Davison, 8 Brentwood Road, South Croydon, CR2 0ND.

Borough of Greenwich. Contact Greenwich Heritage Centre, Building 41, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, SE18 6SP (020 8854 2452).

Hammersmith & Fulham. Contact Keith Whitehouse, 85 Rannoch Road, W6 9SX (020 7385 3723).

Kingston. Enquiries to 020 8546 5386.

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. Contact Finds Manager, Märit Gaimster (020 7639 9091).

Surrey. Enquiries to Rob Poulton, Archaeological Unit Manager, Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking GU21 1ND (01483 594 634).

Annual Lecture and Meeting

The Annual Lecture and Meeting of the *London Archaeologist* will be held at 7 p.m. On Tuesday 22 May at the Institute of Archaeology, 31–34 Gordon Square, London WC1. The speaker will be Alistair Douglas of Pre-Construct Archaeology on 'Recent Excavations at Bermondsey Abbey'. PCA's excavations have revealed extensive remains of the medieval Bermondsey Abbey, standing in some places to just below the modern

ground surface. Some of the more significant remains are to be preserved as part of the development, and will be visible beneath a glass floor in a new restaurant. Alistair will tell us about the excavation and how these ambitious plans for preservation will be put into effect.

Before the talk, the Annual Reports and Accounts will be presented. The proceedings will include some

constitutional amendments, the election of Officers, and the election to the Publication Committee of six Ordinary Members. There will be two vacancies to fill. Nominations should be made to the Secretary, 44 Tantallon Road, London, SW12 8DG. All are welcome to attend; subscribers are entitled to vote. Drinks and light refreshments will be available from 6.30 p.m.