

Commentary

by Gromaticus

Forty years on

This special 36-page issue celebrates the 40th anniversary of the first issue of *the London Archaeologist* (as it was called in 1968). Readers with long memories may point out that issue no. 1 appeared in December 1968, but as this issue also marks the start of Volume 12, it seems to be a good time to celebrate. And we have a lot to celebrate – I've just completed (as part of our digitisation programme) a master table of contents for Volumes 1 to 11, which has over 1300 entries. I haven't counted the number of authors, but it is several hundred. One common theme is that we have always accepted articles from a wide range of sources: academics and professionals, students, and amateur archaeologists, and we are encouraging this mix to continue.

The technology has changed beyond recognition; unless you were there at the time, it must be hard to imagine that as late as 1984 the editor's main 'tools of the trade' were a pair of scissors and a tin of Cow Gum. Not only does the technology change, but the change is accelerating, and one wonders what the next 40 years will bring. Our collaboration with the CBA has enabled us to take advantage of some (fairly) recent technology, such as online delivery of articles through the *Archlib* facility, and online subscription through the CBA shop.

CBA London takes shape

The CBA London Group, whose formation was announced in our previous issue, is beginning to get down

to work. It now has Trustees and Officers: Chairman, Andrew Dinsmore, MP; Secretary, James Doerer (a PhD student at UCL Institute of Archaeology); Treasurer, Shiela Broomfield. Existing CBA members can join the Group as well as, or instead of, their present regional group. It's first major impact on the London scene is likely to be in October, when the annual CBA weekend event will take place in London from 17th to 19th.

Getting down to business

One of CBA London's first activities in its advocacy role for London's archaeology was to write to the main candidates in the recent mayoral elections. This provoked a detailed response from Ken Livingstone, a very brief reply from Brian Paddick, and nothing at all from Boris Johnson. We hope that this is not a bad omen, and trust that CBA London will do all they can to establish a good working relationship with the new Mayor and his team. This is particularly important in the light of the news (mentioned in Ken Livingstone's reply) that the DCMS's share of support for the Museum of London is being transferred to the GLA. Ken Livingstone also mentioned the importance of the work being done by MoLAS and others in advance of the 2012 Olympic Games, in providing a 'past' for this previously neglected part of London. There are worries here too, if one links current news items about cost over-runs with rumours of delays in funding some aspects of the archaeology.

Who do you think you are?

It was a very interesting experience to join the UCL stall at the *Discover Archaeology Live* part of the National History Show at Olympia in May. Archaeology was represented the CBA, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, *Current Archaeology* and two university departments. Although the main interests of visitors were family and military history, the opportunity to handle artefacts was a great attraction, suggesting that perhaps artefacts rather than excavation is the way to interest a wider public in archaeology.

Burial excavation (again)

Just after the Spring issue went to press, a Ministry of Justice statement included the following: Exhumation licence applications under the Burial Act 1857 will be considered wherever human remains are buried in sites to which the Disused Burial Grounds (Amendment) Act 1981 or other burial ground legislation does not apply. This will reverse the recent change of practice and is expected to apply to the majority of archaeological excavations.

Index

We apologise that the indexes for volumes 10 and 11 are not yet available. We hope to distribute them with the Winter 2008/9 issue.

Subscription rates

We have simplified the subscription rates for overseas readers. Please see the contents page for details.

Annual Lecture and Meeting

The 39th AGM of the *London Archaeologist* was held on Tuesday 20 May at the Institute of Archaeology, 31–34 Gordon Square, London WC1. The following officers were elected: Managing Editor, Peter Rowsome; Editor, Clive Orton; Assistant Editor, Märit Gaimster; Treasurer, Alastair Ainsworth; Membership Secretary, Jo Udall; Secretary, Becky Wallower (she also continues as acting Marketing

Manager). Richard Lock was re-appointed as Independent Examiner. Sarah Dhanjal, Sophie Jackson and John Shepherd were elected as Ordinary Members of the Publication Committee, and Robin Neilsen, Gary Brown and John Brown were re-elected. Standing down after ten years' service as Managing Editor, David Gaimster was warmly thanked in his absence, and was awarded an honorary lifetime

membership of the Association and a gift on behalf of the Publication Committee.

After the close of business, Sophie Jackson of MoLAS spoke on 'Mithras and other dilemmas', concentrating on the issues arising from the redevelopment of Bucklersbury House, where the remains of the London Mithraeum have been displayed until recently.