

A REVIEW OF 2010 FOR CBA LONDON



In many ways, 2010 has been CBA London's most important year to date. We have put on a handful of popular activities, lobbied for greater recognition of archaeology in public policy and continued to grow our membership. Some of the highlights are outlined in this newsletter, with a focus on two recent events: History Hunters and the London Archaeology Forum.

For those that are not members it is worth saying that CBA London is a regional group of the Council for British Archaeology, and is a not-for-profit educational organisation working throughout London to involve people in archaeology and to promote the appreciation and care of the historic environment for the benefit of present and future generations. We seek to act as a point of reference for all Londoners interested in the past and to be a robust advocate for archaeology within London's unique political apparatus.

CBA London exists:

- *for participation*: to support involvement in archaeology across London
- *for education*: to provide and encourage open access to scholarship, study and skills in archaeology
- *for advocacy*: to ensure adequate protection of London's historic environment.

JANUARY TO OCTOBER

Much of the year's activity has been covered by previous issues of the newsletter but it is worth remembering that the first part of the year saw the group officially constituted at our Inaugural General Meeting (IGM). Thank you to everybody who came along and voted. The members elected a new board of trustees and officers and approved our constitution. The IGM was followed by the

Spring/Summer 2010 London Archaeological Forum. More about the autumn/winter Forum below...

The trustees elected are as follows:

Chairman: Andrew Dismore
Vice Chairman: Don Cooper
Secretary: James Doeser
Treasurer: Shiela Broomfield
Trustees: Gary Brown, David Calow, Raksha Dave, Sarah Dhanjal, John Hayward, Peter Pickering, Lorna Richardson, Brian Philp, Harvey Sheldon, Barney Sloane, Roy Stephenson, Kate Sumnall, Becky Wallower

During the summer months CBA London was on hand to assist local societies in delivering the Festival of British Archaeology and we actively promoted a large number of events around the capital. The group also organised two site visits during the summer: our second visit to Syon Park excavations (led by CBA London trustee Harvey Sheldon) and a foreshore walk at the Strand-on-the-Green site near Kew (led by CBA London trustee Lorna Richardson). By far and away the most ambitious project undertaken by CBA London this year was our History Hunters event.

HISTORY HUNTERS

History Hunters was a family archaeology-themed digital orienteering event held by CBA London on 9th October at the Museum of London and various locations around the city.

The History Hunters project was initiated in response to the Mayor of London's call for organisations to participate in the Story of London festival. The festival this year aimed to showcase the capital's rich history as a centre for world-beating ideas, invention and pioneers. The festival took place from 1-10 October, with around 100 events across the capital.



If you would like any information from CBA London about our experience of being part of the Story of London Festival then please get in touch via the usual channels. We are keen to share our experience with other archaeology societies and community groups in London. It was a great way of reaching out to new audiences but there are definitely things we would do differently next time. The success of this year's event was in large part due to the hard work and enthusiasm of CBA London's Assistant Lucy Grimshaw.

Here is how the event unfolded in October...

After being briefed at the History Hub (also known to readers as the Clore Learning Centre at the Museum of London) and given an instruction booklet with oblique photographs and cryptic clues, teams of families were sent out into the city to find our volunteers who were stationed at their sites. At each site the participants heard all about the stories associated with the place where they were standing. This information was delivered by volunteers who had undertaken their own original research into the sites.

Our amazing volunteers (above) had researched nine stories, each linked to a

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specific location: Blossoms Inn, Death Stalks the Streets of London (delivered at the Monument); Environmental Changes and the River Thames (delivered at the foreshore), Fishmongers' Hall, Inns of London (delivered at the Southbank – photo left below), Livery Halls, River Traffic of Roman London (delivered at Guy's Hospital), Smithfield, The 'Great Stink' of London (delivered from the Millennium Bridge). For a breakdown of the route and photos of the event visit <http://www.londonhistoryhunters.org>.

Participants were encouraged to capture their experiences using their own mobile phones or digital cameras and to post their photos directly to the History Hub where some of the volunteers were collating participants' images into a digital

storyboard and posting them live online.

Throughout the event the public were able to handle and learn about real archaeological artefacts associated with the sites at the History Hub (thanks to the Museum of London's handling collection – photo left). The event ended with a comic strip exercise led by CBA trustee Sarah Dhanjal in which younger participants explored in further detail one of the sites that they had visited that morning. Children of all ages conclusively demonstrated their ability to create amazing and bizarre illustrated stories from the history of London. Feedback from the event was extremely positive and CBA London are looking to replicate the History Hunters event again in future. Stories about London's past also formed the basis for our other event in this autumn/winter: the London Archaeological Forum.

CBA London was very happy to host

LONDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL FORUM

the London Archaeological Forum (LAF) again in November, the first new format version of LAF, for which we identified a small number of projects that we thought the world would like to know about. We were delighted that Christopher Constable from Southwark Council was



able to tell the LAF all about the Borough Market site currently being transformed as a result of the Thameslink programme of development. Christopher gave us a whistle-stop tour of the archaeological work that had happened in 2010 and there were some dramatic photographs of the constrained conditions in which work had to take place on site. Hana Lewis from Museum of London Archaeology told the LAF all about the work that had taken place this year at the Holywell Lane site in Shoreditch along the East London Line extension. Hana was able to give some clues as to what was going on at the site through all stages of occupation – including that when the famous witch bottle was in use (see previous issue of the newsletter for more).

Guy Taylor (photo previous page) told the LAF about a Digging Dads Army project at Shooters Hill and Michael Meekums updated the LAF on activity by the Orpington and District Archaeological Society at Scadbury Manor. A big thanks to all four of our fantastic speakers. If you have news of recent archaeological work that you think is of interest to others then please contact CBA London and we'll be sure to give you the opportunity to showcase your work in the next LAF (probably to occur in the late spring of 2011).

The LAF then hosted the awards ceremony of the 2010 London Archaeological Prize. The prize is given every two years for the best publication about the archaeology of London. This year the prize was won by Julian Bowsher and Pat Miller for their book, *The Rose and the Globe – Playhouses of Shakespeare's Bankside, Southwark: Excavations 1988-91*. Congratulations to



Julian and Pat! (below) A certificate and a cheque for £250 was presented to the authors by Clive Orton, Editor of *London Archaeologist* and chairman of the panel of judges. An additional award (of £100) was given to Pre-Construct Archaeology for their publication *Secrets of the Gardens: Archaeologists Unearth the Lives of Roman Londoners at Drapers' Gardens*. Congratulations to Pre-Construct as well.

After the prize-giving the LAF moved onto discussion of contemporary issues of importance for the archaeological community in London. A lot of discussion focussed on the impact of cuts to local authorities and everyone was urged to be vigilant in ensuring that conservation, museums and heritage expertise were retained by local councils despite the pressure to reduce costs and staffing levels. There was also lively debate about how private archaeological contractors could work effectively with developers to ensure greater engagement with the public at archaeological sites under excavation. It emerged that some developers were sympathetic to the idea of allowing greater access or information for the public but that this was not a commonly held perspective. Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment and its associated guidance documentation might make a big difference in this area (since it allows for the possibility of greater public engagement with archaeology in the planning process) but this remains largely untested since the policy's introduction in May. As will no doubt become the tradition the LAF then de-camped to the Lord Raglan pub for refreshments. Hopefully we will see you at the next LAF in 2011.

UNTIL NEXT TIME...

It has been a really busy year for CBA London and with your support we hope to make 2011 equally active and adventurous for the group. If you are not a member but would like to join then please get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

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