

Commentary

By GROMATICUS

On to Volume 3

THE LAST issue of a volume is a traditional time for looking both backwards and forwards. The changes in the organisation of London's archaeology in the four years of volume 2 have been enormous, and have been ably charted by Harvey Sheldon in his paper "Recent Developments in the Archaeology of Greater London" (*Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 124, no. 5240, July 1976). He shows that the Department of the Environment's grant allocation for rescue archaeology in England has increased from just under £300,000 in 1971/72 to over £1,500,000 in 1975/76, and that London's share has increased from about 5 per cent to 10 per cent. This rapid growth in funds has been matched by an increase in manpower employed on rescue archaeology from 9 (in 1970/71) to 76 (in 1975/76). The content of *the London Archaeologist* has mirrored these changes, with an increase in the proportion of articles contributed by full-time paid archaeologists. This is only to be expected: since they are paid from public funds the public has the right to see the fruits of their labours at the earliest opportunity.

Nevertheless, the part-time and unpaid sector is far from eclipsed, and contributes a steady flow of articles, representing both the efforts of local societies and the researches of individual workers. New authors continue to make their debut in *the London Archaeologist* — Daphne Lorimer and Stephen Caiger (both 'amateurs') and Andy Boddington of the D.U.A. in this issue alone — alongside well-established contributors like Harvey Sheldon and David Sturdy.

What of the future, and more specifically, of volume 3? *Gromaticus* does not foresee any radical changes in content or format, and hopes for a good balance of articles, both between periods — from palaeolithic to industrial — and between sources — Units, Local Societies and freelance researchers. But the editor is very much in your hands, because it is the readership who supply the articles, and who can express their opinions about the content of *the London Archaeologist*. So if there is anything of which you would like to see more (or less) in the *L.A.*, the end of a volume is a good time to make your views known.

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One innovation is not waiting for volume 3: the notice of post-excavation work has been revived (see p.425). This notice will be cumulative, i.e. *the London Archaeologist* will not publish notices of on-going sessions every quarter, but only new notifications or changes to existing arrangements. It seems almost certain that not all post-excavation groups have been included: if yours has been left out, tell the editor and it will be listed in the next issue. All the groups listed on this occasion have said that they give informal training "on the job" and welcome new members, whether experienced or not.

Publication

TWO of this issue's articles are likely to stir up some controversy. David Sturdy (pp. 417-422) examines the delicate subject of the DoE's record of publishing their own sites, and awards them a low mark. Harvey Sheldon (p.414) looks at the more general problem of the "publication crisis" and official reaction to it. He hints that the real problem may not be the high cost of publication or shortage of suitable journals, but a lack of will, motivation, and, above all, resources devoted to post-excavation work. Replies, comments or suggestions on either of these topics will be welcome.

There is one way in which anyone can help overcome the "publication crisis": if you are not already a member of a post-excavation group, then join one. Between them, the groups listed on p.425 cover a wide range of types of work, meet most evenings of the week and cover much of the London area. So why not make this your new (academic) year resolution?

Subscriptions

Gromaticus would like to remind readers that as from the next issue, the subscription rate to *the London Archaeologist* will be £1.60 for 4 issues per year (post free).

Erratum

The Secretary of the Islington Archaeology and History Society is Miss Mary McGuire, Flat 5, 120 Rotherfield Street, N.1. (01-226 3960), not Malcolm Tucker, as shown in *L.A.* 2 no. 15. Malcolm Tucker is leader of the Society's Industrial Archaeology Group. Our apologies to them both.