

Mosaic

Museum matters

The Museum of London re-opened on 6 August, but with opening hours limited to 11.30am–3.30pm on weekdays, and the usual opening times at weekends. Tickets have to be booked online before a visit.

We previewed their exhibition about London's largest ever Bronze Age hoard from Havering in April (LA 15–12) just as the exhibition, *Havering Hoard: A Bronze Age mystery*, was about to go on display. Its opening at Museum of London Docklands has been delayed until September, but it will remain on display until 18 April 2021.

Sadly, Roy Stephenson, former Head of the Early Collections and most recently leader on heritage and environment matters, has also left the Museum, weakening even further the archaeological input that staff may have into the New Museum.

New Roman Archaeology Network

The Roman Society have launched a new email subscription list to enable communication between people working on Roman archaeology in the UK and across the world, including Historic England staff, those employed in the heritage sector and in commercial archaeology. Intended as a virtual 'notice board', it will keep colleagues informed about future events and conferences, funding opportunities, jobs and literature searches, but not to give notice of new publications.

To post to the list, send an email to: romanarchaeology@jiscmail.ac.uk (your message will be distributed to everyone subscribed and saved to the archive). The list's homepage is: www.jiscmail.ac.uk/ROMANARCHAEOLOGY. Every message posted to the mailing list will be archived here.

London at sea

The warship *London*, a 17th-century Royal Naval vessel, built in Chatham in 1656, blew up and sank in the Thames Estuary, off Southend, on 7 March 1665. Over 300 lives were lost and the event was recorded by Samuel Pepys in his diary.

The protected wreck has been on the Heritage at Risk register since 2009. Maritime archaeological investigations have resulted in the recovery of over 700 finds from the wreck. Buried in silt for over 300 years, leather and wood items were preserved due to reduced oxygen levels.

The collaboration between various specialists has been a key component in unlocking crucial information about naval warfare and operations, but it also tells the story of life on board a warship in the 17th century. More than 20 specialists have been working on the material and the results will be published in a monograph.

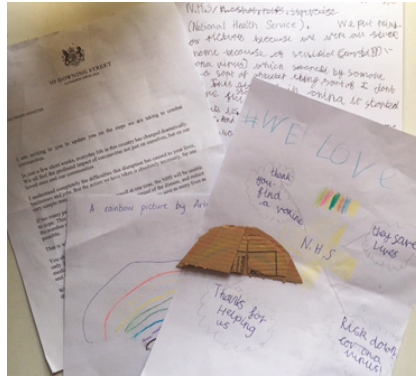


Photo: Alexis Haslam

Lockdown legacy

With an eye to the archaeology, or the digging up, of their front garden, Alexis (at Fulham Palace, see p47) and Rebecca Haslam (of PCA) decided to use their Lockdown spare time by burying a Covid-19 Time Capsule under the new path containing a letter from their oldest son, Billy, with drawings by their youngest, Arlo, and fragments of the original railings and tile path, found during their excavations. With it, they included the letter every household received from Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

New isotope dating for wood

It seems that there is a new technique with the potential to date wood samples with less than 60–80 growth rings, using stable oxygen isotope signals rather than measuring tree growth rings. Examples of oak and elm have been sampled from the portcullis windlass mechanism in the Byward Tower, Tower of London, a structure which previously was undatable. The oak gear wheel had a felling date of winter 1656/7, while an elm shaft gave a date post 1648.

The ability to date elm indicates a significant method for dating species other than oak.¹ The method has also been used in the Palace of Westminster where oak timbers from the ceiling lintel have been dated to the spring of 1659.

Viking superspreader

Extinct strains of smallpox have been found in the teeth of Viking skeletons, indicating the disease was widespread in northern Europe during the 7th century, earlier than thought. Although historians believe smallpox may have existed since 10,000 BC, there has been no scientific proof of the presence of the virus before the 17th century until now. It is not known how it first infected humans but, like Covid-19, it is believed to have come from animals.

An international team of researchers analysed the genetic material of the ancient strains and found their structure to differ from the modern smallpox virus, which was eradicated in the 20th century. They say the findings, published in the journal *Science*,

pushes the date of the confirmed existence of smallpox back by 1,000 years.

New Provost for Gresham College

Simon Thurley, former Director of the Museum of London and latterly CEO of English Heritage, has been appointed as the new Provost at Gresham College.

Thurley has been Visiting Professor of the Built Environment at Gresham since 2009, giving regular series of lectures at the Museum of London, and will continue to speak in that role in 2020–21.

All Gresham lectures are live-streamed, and more than previous 2,500 presentations can be seen on the college's website (see *Virtual Visits*, right).

Stonehenge

The origin of the 15 giant sarsen stones at Stonehenge has finally been identified. In the 1950s, a 1metre-long core had been removed during work at Stonehenge and has only now been returned. To check that it came from one of these standing megaliths, x-ray fluorescence tests on all the sarsens at Stonehenge showed their cores matched and that they all came from the same source.

By the 1920s it was already known that the smaller bluestones came from Wales and more recently their origin has been narrowed down to the Preseli Hills in Pembrokeshire. The source for the sarsens has now been traced to West Woods, near Marlborough, an area 15 miles (25km) north of the site on Salisbury Plain. It is unlikely that sarsen boulders found locally were ever large enough for use as megaliths, but the Marlborough Downs still has scattered examples and also standing monuments such as at Avebury. The identification of the Stonehenge sarsens, as being relatively local, now completes the story.

National Heritage List for England

Ten landscapes in London have been granted protection and added to the Register of Parks and Gardens, part of the National Heritage List for England. They include: Alexandra Road Park in Camden – an important collaboration between Neave Brown and the renowned landscape architect Janet Jack – and Roper's Garden, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, which was created on the site of wartime bomb damage.

In addition, the slide in the children's playground at the Brunel Estate (Westminster) and the Awakening Sculpture at Roper's Garden (Chelsea), associated with the landscapes, have been listed as Grade II.

Emergency Heritage Grants

On 29 May, Historic England announced emergency heritage grants totalling £1.8 million for 70 projects. Successful applicants included the Mary Rose Trust and L – P : Archaeology, to help them produce a free archaeology social distancing kit (see p47).

1. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jas.2020.105103> [accessed 26 August 2020].

Virtual Visits (mostly)

EXHIBITIONS

Museum of London Docklands
Havering Hoard: a Bronze Age mystery.
Runs 11 September to 18 April 2021, free entry with timed ticket. Bookable up to 6 weeks ahead, with more tickets released weekly. Visit <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london-docklands>

FIND OUT MORE

My London (find objects from the Museum of London's collections from your borough) <https://tinyurl.com/y5wxmncz>

English Heritage Blue Plaques (find local plaques or those honouring Black and Gay Londoners) <https://tinyurl.com/y42gjjf5>

Our City Together (awesome events and activities to enjoy) <https://www.ourcitytogether.london/do>

A London Inheritance (comparing photographs taken in the late 1940s and 1950s with the sites today and looks at their history) <https://alondoninheritance.com>

CITIZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) interactive map (explore London's intertidal heritage from prehistory to the present) <https://tinyurl.com/y6orc8jg>

LOOK FOR YOURSELF

Go to <https://www.youtube.com/> and then

type the code in **bold** into the Search box. Or type the whole URL into your browser.

A Tour of London Wall by Jane Sidell
QpVKwZsTTvE

Billingsgate Roman House and Baths by Howard Bengel, Kim Biddulph and Andrew Lane
9nOUISN8CWg

Shakespeare's Globe
<https://tinyurl.com/y3pkgacq>

Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich (Painted Hall) <https://virtualtour.ornc.org>

The original Crystal Palace (in Hyde Park) <https://tinyurl.com/y5c7z9zb>

Buckingham Palace
<https://tinyurl.com/y7zffsp>

Churchill's War Rooms
<https://tinyurl.com/y28uvazd>

ONLINE TALKS via YouTube

'Prehistoric Finds from the Thames' by Jon Cotton **h7EM2rcgAal**

'The Early River Thames: the Iron Age and Before' by Jon Cotton **ApnRlmzjFw**

'Pompeii of the North: The return of the Temple of Mithras in London' by Sadie Watson **MA1OvbZ5-1s**

'Roman London's First Voices: the writing tablets from the Bloomberg Excavations' by Sadie Watson **TfjekGfsZ4**

'Discovering the Port of Roman London'

by Gustav Milne **OR4ZgsHZvia**

'London in the Not-So-Dark Ages' by Lyn Blackmore **qwo88DS-pls**

'The Growth of London as a Port from Roman to Medieval Times' by Gustav Milne **bXSM05m3OZc**

'London Merchants and their Residences' by Simon Thurley **1ZrzTOR_yz8**

'The Five Catastrophes that made London' by Simon Thurley **U2tHjztrLQ**

'From Sail to Steam: London's Role in a Shipbuilding Revolution' by Eliot Wragg **G4fcXaScY_c**

'The Billingsgate Fishwives' by Laura Miller **ZP15SH0_CoM**

'Designing a Museum for London's Future' by Sharon Ament and Asif Khan **FwjofiltDXs**

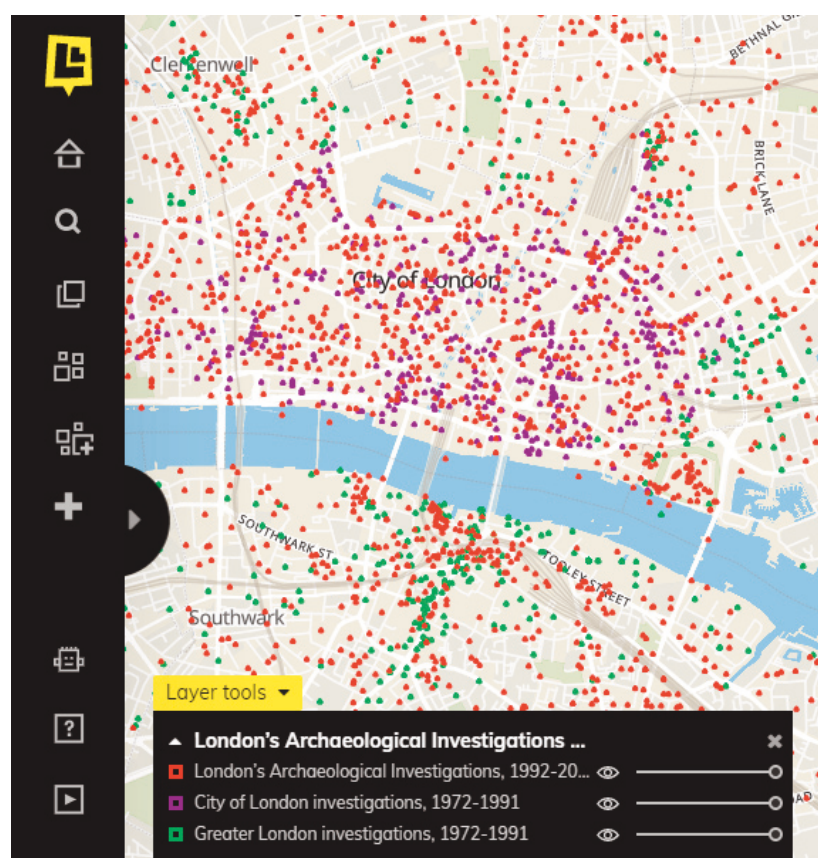
OTHER LECTURES

'Excavations at Bloomberg London: new discoveries along the Walbrook' by Sadie Watson <https://tinyurl.com/yxvw3wmo>

'From the Romans to the Saxons: results from the archaeological fieldwork at the site of St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, Trafalgar Square' by Alison Telfer <https://tinyurl.com/y2pkp6bn>

'Portals to the Past: controlling risk and maximising benefit on the Crossrail archaeology programme' by Jay Carver <https://tinyurl.com/y28bxz72>

Something to celebrate – Layers of London Project



The wonderful team of volunteers who have been putting the articles from *London Archaeologist* onto the Layers of London mapping have now finished their task.

The volunteers who have participated are: Guy Bloom, Wendy Rudge, Solange La Rose, Judy Warner, John Walledge, Debbie Pearson, Linda Gray, and Jane Dixon, led by Adam Corsini and aided by LA committee member Sinead Marshall.

Guy Bloom has kindly agreed to keep adding articles as and when they are added to ADS. All the LA articles on ADS, 709 in all, have now been added.

Statistics show that, by the end of July, these have already been viewed by just over 200 users, and over 400 users have accessed it since work was started in October 2019.

London Archaeologist also publishes the annual Fieldwork Round-up (the 2019 Round-up is due to be delivered with the Winter magazine). Adam Corsini has manually created the database for the Round-up summaries and these are now visible in the LA layer.

By the end of July, this layer had been accessed 81 times, whereas the MOLA layer has been accessed 255 times and Historic England's HERs accessed 52 times.

LA would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to Adam Corsini of Layers of London and all the volunteers who have worked so hard on our behalf – **so, please make use of it!**

Fifty Years of London's Archaeology: Papers from the 50th anniversary conference

This book presents a collection of papers written to celebrate fifty years of *London Archaeologist* magazine, from 1968 to 2018. It presents broad and multi-faceted views of London's archaeology throughout the latter part of the 20th and into the 21st century. It is to be hoped that this will provide a lasting legacy, both for the magazine and for all of those involved or interested in the archaeology of Greater London.

Part 1: Archaeology in London 1968–2018

Part 2: People in Archaeology

Part 3: New Approaches, New Possibilities

Part 4: Interpretation and Presentation

Part 5: The future of London's Archaeology

Part 6: Period Synopses by five leading specialists in their field:
on Prehistoric London – Jon Cotton; Roman London – Peter Rowsome;
Saxon London – Robert Cowie; Medieval London – John Schofield;
and Post-medieval London – Jacqui Pearce

London Archaeologist

Fifty Years of London's Archaeology:
Papers from the 50th Anniversary Conference



Edited by Victoria Ridgeway, Diana Briscoe, Jenny Hall and Becky Wallower

How to Buy

Published in March 2020, *Fifty Years of London's Archaeology* is now available either through our website, where an order form can be downloaded:

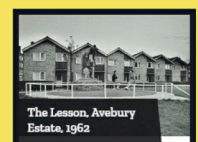
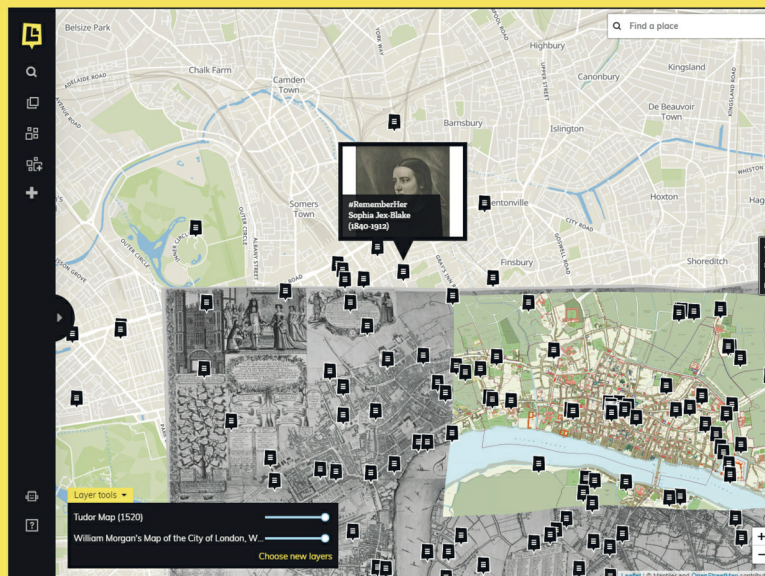
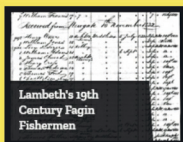
<https://www.londonarchaeologist.org.uk/la--50.html>

or as an online order direct from PCA for **£18 + £3.50 p&p**. To place your order, please go to:

<https://www.pre-construct.com/publications/>

www.LayersofLondon.org

Collectively mapping the stories and heritage of London



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