

Mosaic

New leader sought

Are you sympathetic to London's archaeology and heritage? If so, you can follow in the footsteps of Janet Miller and be the CEO of MOLA. One wonders what direction MOLA will take when Janet Miller leaves in the summer after five years.

Head-hunters have been looking for someone to 'provide visible and inspiring strategic and operational leadership and direction to the organisation' with 'the commercial experience and expertise to lead and manage a significant and ambitious professional services venture'.

The job advert also asked candidates to bring 'a sufficient understanding of and empathy with the archaeology/heritage sector'. Fingers crossed that the appointment will be someone who cares more than that about the future of London's archaeology and who will have the foresight both to call upon and protect the vast resources and skills belonging to the long-serving, experienced archaeologists of MOLA.

Archaeological curator required

Talking of new posts, the Museum of London is seeking a Senior Curator (Archaeology) to act as the lead curator, 'championing the value of our archaeological collection.' They are seeking someone who has worked with archaeological artefacts, has an expert knowledge of Britain's archaeology, 'ideally with regard to London' and with exhibition and media experience.

Given that this post replaced the curators of the Prehistoric and Roman collections some 10 years ago, there is no mention of needing to be knowledgeable about these national and international collections, and asks for little London-based experience.

This person will also have an input into developing the archaeological collections and in advising on the Archaeological Archive project which, hopefully, will mean that the Archive will not be as moribund as it currently seems to be, COVID-19 or not.

Lockdown techniques

Despite all the difficulties, site archaeologists have worked really hard over the past year under difficult circumstances, but perhaps more technology is needed so that the customary visits from external bodies (which have not been possible during the lockdowns) could provide the opportunity to see elements of the site in detail and even to demonstrate how units are adhering to health and safety regulations during the pandemic. Surely a laptop or mobile could relay the live information better than any photograph? This would allow questions to be asked on the spot and to prevent any misconceptions.

Becket2020



© Museum of London

Numerous activities had been planned in London and Canterbury for 2020 to commemorate the 900th anniversary of Thomas Becket's birth in London and the 850th anniversary of his murder in Canterbury. Due to Covid, many events were postponed until this year.

An exhibition at the British Museum is due to open on 22 April this year, but a small display in the medieval gallery at the Museum of London beat the first lockdown last year and will continue for 2021. Using the museum's unrivalled collection of souvenir pilgrim badges (including the one featured on our Autumn 2020 cover), the display explores aspects of Becket's life and his impact on the City of London.

The son of Norman French immigrants, he was born in Ironmonger Lane, Cheapside, where the site of his childhood home is now occupied by the Mercers' Hall. In his lifetime, Becket was called 'Thomas of London' and, after his death, Londoners boasted about his London roots and connections with the capital.

London adopted him as their patron saint and believed that he kept an especial watch on the city. The seals of the mayor and the Corporation of London bore his image – the impression of the Common Seal of the City of London (above) depicts Archbishop Thomas Becket seated at its centre.

All change?

With conductor Simon Rattle's departure to Germany, the City have cancelled their ill-fated £288 million London Centre for Music. They are now planning a phased revamp of the Barbican Centre, including the space to be vacated by the Museum of London.

When and if the Museum opens in West Smithfield in 2024, it might be affected by building works when the adjacent meat market moves to Dagenham Docks in 2028.

Royal Parks

To match the report featured in *Gromaticus*, another report, compiled by AOC in 2018, looked at the Royal Parks and has produced a Royal Parks Archaeology Strategy document.

This report followed an occasion when Richmond Park horticulturalists over-planted the most conspicuous and accessible piece of surviving late medieval ridge and furrow within Greater London with trees, enclosed and fenced against the deer. With a new set of management plans for individual parks now in place, this strategy document assumes a much greater significance [see <https://tinyurl.com/y3wug9km>; accessed 9 February 2021].

The document provides the overarching Archaeological Management Strategy, which that will cover the way heritage and archaeology is approached during the day-to-day management and maintenance process within the Royal Parks by employees, contractors and park managers [see <https://tinyurl.com/y3ogony9>; accessed 9 February 2021].

Star qualities

The Dig, the new film about the Sutton Hoo excavations, has used the expertise of two London archaeologists. Roy Stephenson, ex-head of the early curatorial department of the Museum of London, was approached in 2019 for advice about excavation techniques by the designers/set-builders for the film. As archaeological adviser, he was later invited to take some of the cast to the Boars Head Yard excavation in Whitechapel, where Heather Knight showed them how to dig and trowel in an archaeological fashion. Roy even advised them on the type of soil fill for the boat's burial chamber and on suitable props.

Professor Grimes was one of numerous famous archaeologists at Sutton Hoo and John Shepherd, who had worked for him, was able to advise actor, Arsher Ali, who wanted to know all about his mannerisms.

Stephen Nelson

It is with regret that we heard of the death of Stephen Nelson after Christmas. He wrote about Kingston and Epsom for *London Archaeologist* in the 1980s and, more recently, he had been active as Vice-President of Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society (EEHAS).

The Society's President, Jon Cotton, has paid tribute to him, praising his extensive knowledge of both post-Roman pottery and the archaeology of Epsom, Ewell and Kingston. He admitted that his loss will be very keenly felt in the society.

Virtual Visits (mostly)

EXHIBITIONS

British Museum: *Thomas Becket: murder and the making of a saint*. Runs 22 April to 22 August 2021. For information on prices and booking timed tickets, and to sign up for updates, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yxhpbmur>

Museum of London Docklands:

Havering Hoard: a Bronze Age mystery. Runs until August 2021, free entry with timed ticket. Bookable up to six weeks ahead, with more tickets released weekly. Visit <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london-docklands>

MUSEUMS ONLINE

British Museum: did you know that you can make a virtual tour of every room in the British Museum, using their Galleries link? So, did you watch *The Dig* on Netflix? See the real finds by using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/ul59d6q>

Bank of England Museum: over 325 years old, the Bank has a wonderful collection of items relating to money and banking history that spans over 1,500 of history. Browse the collection using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/y84m2djg>

LOOK FOR YOURSELF

Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=> and type the code in **bold** into the Search box. Or type the URL into your browser.

The Secrets of Westminster Abbey: a Time Team Special from 2010 investigates the

Cosmatesque mosaic and other treasures of the Abbey. YouTube [0uqw6c6L6GQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uqw6c6L6GQ)

Endell Street – the trailblazing women who ran WWI’s most remarkable military hospital: it was staffed entirely by women and played a key role in the treatment of injured British soldiers during WWI. Endell Street treated 26,000 wounded from France, Gallipoli and elsewhere. After the war, the hospital remained open for a further year to treat victims of the Spanish flu. YouTube [xSSMxMpUHCI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xSSMxMpUHCI)

ONLINE LECTURES

13 April (6.30 pm) London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. ‘Excavations within the Great Kitchen of Westminster Abbey’ by Joe Brooks, Pre-Construct Archaeology. Book via Eventbrite (£2.50 to non-members).

19 April (6.30 pm) London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. ‘John Stow’s Legacy’ by Vanessa Harding, Professor of London History at Birkbeck College. Book via Eventbrite (£2.50 to non-members).

19 April (8.00 pm) Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society. ‘1066: the Siege, Surrender & Triumph of London’ by Kathleen Tyson. Visit [Lectures at https://www.rnelhs.org.uk/](https://www.rnelhs.org.uk/) for the Zoom link and password.

11 May (6.30 pm) London & Middlesex Archaeological Society (with Prehistoric Society). “‘In this Heathe hath many campos bin pitched ...’: The West London

Landscapes Project in context’ by Jon Cotton and Nicholas Elsdon. Book via Eventbrite (£2.50 to non-members).

The Rise of the Private Banker in (Benjamin) Franklin’s London: Dr Perry Gauci, Tutor in Modern History at Lincoln College, Oxford, discusses the development of the banking profession in mid-Georgian London. YouTube [UI5YyC95dTk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UI5YyC95dTk)

FIND OUT MORE

Hidden London: sign up to the London Transport Museum’s virtual tours of several of London’s tube stations and secret spaces, including some so restricted that in-person public tours are impossible (paid option): <https://tinyurl.com/y8at49qu>

Pride of Place: 10 Buildings with a Queer Past (Historic England blog): three buildings in London were featured as part of HE’s LGBTQ+ History Month celebrations. Find out which they were here: <https://tinyurl.com/y96t29fe>

Thames Discovery Programme: have a whole series of films and photographs about their work on the foreshore. The most recent items are here: <https://tinyurl.com/y9clkbml> or follow the links to older photos and films.

READ ALL ABOUT IT

London Parks & Gardens Trust’s publication *Enfield Chase: From Hunters to Commuter* is now available online. Download it here: <https://tinyurl.com/y4e2f9wu>

Thomas Becket: murder and the making of a saint

22 April – 22 August 2021

The Joseph Hotung Great Court Gallery, the British Museum

In April 2021, the British Museum will host the first ever major UK exhibition on the life, death and legacy of Thomas Becket, whose brutal murder inside Canterbury Cathedral in 1170 shook the medieval world. The exhibition will chart over 500 years of history, from Thomas Becket’s remarkable rise from ordinary London beginnings to one of the most powerful figures in England, through to his enduring but divisive legacy in the centuries after his death.

The story will be told through over 100 objects brought together for the first time, including rare loans from across the UK and Europe. The exhibition’s centrepiece will be an entire, recently conserved, medieval stained-glass window on loan from Canterbury Cathedral. It

is one of the seven surviving Miracle Windows, made in the early 1200s to surround Becket’s now-lost shrine in the Cathedral’s Trinity Chapel. The windows tell the stories of miracles attributed to Becket. Many were connected to the healing power of his spilt blood, which led to his canonisation as a saint by the Pope. In preparing the window for the exhibition, it was found that it had been wrongly assembled when restored in the 1660s.

Please see above for tickets and up-to-date information.

RIGHT The healing of Ralph de Longeville – detail from the Miracle window. Ralph sits in front of Becket’s tomb, his legs covered in spot-like sores while an attendant washes his legs with St Thomas’ water

LEFT Close-up of a wax impression inscribed ‘The seal of Thomas of London’ – the only known example from Becket’s personal seal
Both ©The Chapter, Canterbury Cathedral





LAMAS NEWSLETTER

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

London and Middlesex Archaeological Society (<https://www.lamas.org.uk>) are seeking a well organised, enthusiastic new Editor to take over production of the Newsletter which goes out to members 3 times a year (past copies can be viewed here <https://www.lamas.org.uk/archives.html>).

A keen interest in the archaeology and local history of London is essential and you will need to be a member of the Society (see <https://www.lamas.org.uk/join-lamas.html> for details on how to join).

As Editor you will be:

- scheduling and planning each issue in advance;
- ensuring regular contents are accurate and up-to-date;
- finding contributions and writing your own material for inclusion;
- proof reading and editing texts;

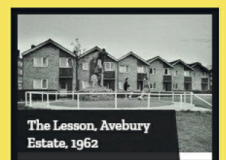
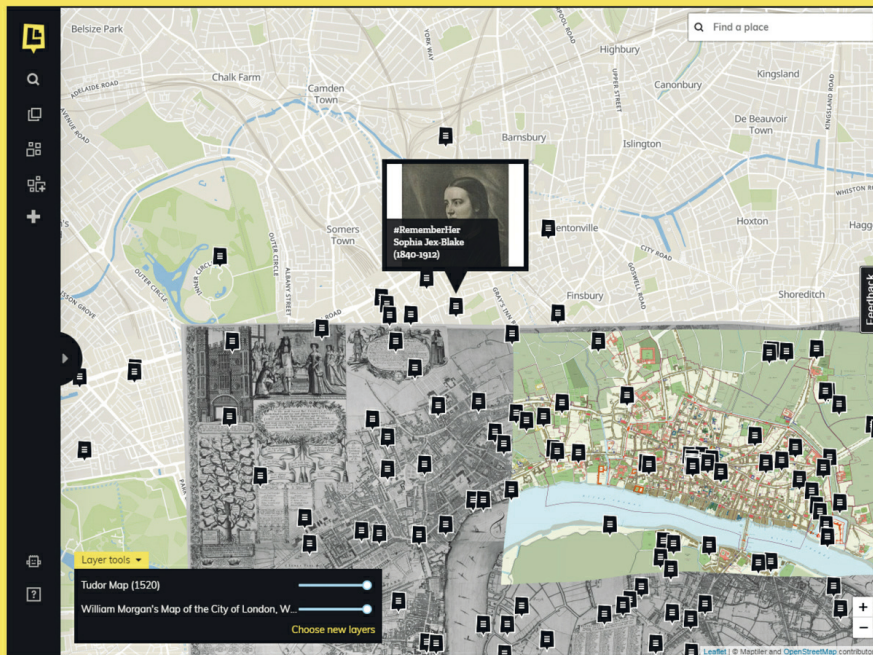
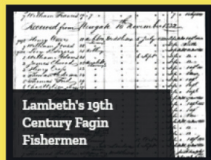
- using desktop publishing software to pull text and images together;
- liaising with the printers and the Hon. Membership Secretary to ensure timely distribution;
- an ex officio member of LAMAS Council and the Publications Committee.

So, if you enjoy searching the internet for interesting archaeological and historical news stories, have a good understanding of the English language and the relevant IT skills needed to bring everything together in an attractive and entertaining publication, and can spare a week or so every 4 months, then you could be the next LAMAS Honorary Newsletter Editor and we would love to hear from you.

The role is unpaid, but all out of pocket expenses will be met by the Society. For more information or to express an interest in the role, please contact the Hon. Secretary at secretary@lamas.org.uk.

www.LayersofLondon.org

Collectively mapping the stories and heritage of London



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layersoflondon@london.ac.uk

