

More discoveries at Landmark Court, Southwark

In the last issue we looked back at earlier and current excavations on the Southwark Street site, but the ongoing excavations have made the exciting discovery of two Roman mosaic panels.



In January 2021, MOLA archaeologists had found evidence for buildings and the remains of plain tessellated floors at Landmark Court, Southwark Street, see our last issue (LA **16** (7), 171). Now they have uncovered a large area of floor with two decorative panels. The mosaics are set in wide areas of plain red tessellated flooring from what was a dining room.

The floor is made up of two highly decorated panels of different sizes set apart on a plain red floor. About 50% of the main panel survives and features what would have been four large, colourful, stylised flowers set square within guilloche bands. A central panel shows another flower set within a diamond-shaped guilloche band. Similar flowers are portrayed on several other London mosaics – for example at Ironmonger Lane and Princes Street. A lotus flower on each side is surrounded by black squares and white

isosceles triangles inside the main border of black and white lozenges, each containing a guilloche knot; the acute angles terminate in a voluted peltae. The closest parallel to this border is on a large Bacchus mosaic from Leadenhall Street, now in the British Museum.

The guilloche knot is also portrayed on the smaller panel. This has a simpler design, with two knots, two stylised flowers and striking geometric motifs in black and white with red highlights – there is an almost exact parallel from Trier, Germany. Dr David Neal, a leading expert in Roman mosaics, thinks that it provides evidence for travelling Roman artisans at work in London. He considers other elements of the designs can be attributed to the ‘Acanthus group’ – a team of mosaicists working in London, who developed their own unique local style.

While the largest mosaic panel can be dated to the late 2nd–early 3rd century AD, traces of an underlying earlier mosaic show refurbishment over the years. This accords with the suggestion that the building might be a Roman *mansio*, a high-status rest-house.

The mosaics will be recorded, lifted and taken off site for conservation. It is hoped the mosaics will be put on temporary display before being incorporated into the new development.

ABOVE The mosaics lie within a stone’s throw of the Shard. See Annual Lecture (19 May) on opposite page.

LEFT The larger multi-coloured decorative panel with design elements that can also be found on mosaics north of the Thames

BELOW The smaller panel has a design linked to a German example
Photos © Andy Chopping/MOLA



Increase in subscription rates

Back in the summer of 2004, the old, small-format *London Archaeologist* informed us about a Jesuit cemetery in Roehampton, an evaluation on the Little Rose Estate, many ‘bird-pots’ – and a decision to raise the subscription rates. The committee hoped that the new rates would hold for four years!

Now, 18 years on, we are raising the rates again – so the

cover price of the Summer 2022 issue (Vol 16–09) will be **£5.95**. The UK subscription will be **£22** (with a special rate of **£18** for Under-25s in the UK).

The subscription for those in Europe will become **£30** and **£40** for rest of the world. Sadly, our increasing costs, particularly postal rates, are impossible to ignore.

As a charity, we need to ensure

the magazine covers its costs and has the capacity to develop. The Covid ‘interlude’ made it difficult to consider a rise in the last two years for operational reasons, but we hope you have appreciated the fantastic good value that LA has become. Your enthusiasm and interest for over 50 years has been our driving force and we trust in your continued support.