

MOLAS LIBRARY

# NEWS

JANUARY 1990  
No. 16



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## INTRODUCTION

Happy New Year to everybody who survived the effort of Christmas and the Sports and Social Club party. Research has suggested that digging is an excellent way to shed those excess pounds....

## STAFF

### Resigned

Mark Adams  
Annie Hodgson  
Martin Reid  
Val Horsman

### Appointments

Niall Roycroft: SA Bishopsgate/Spital Square  
Richard Greateorex: SA Fleet Valley Project  
Gavin Oulton: SA Fleet Valley Project

The post of Senior Archaeologist: Photography (Trevor Hurst) was made redundant from 31/12/89.

## JOBS

DGLA Senior Archaeologist: 59 Mansell Street

DGLA Senior Archaeologist: 67-71 Usher Road, Bow

DGLA Limehouse Link Project Finds: 2 Archaeologists (Grade 4)

DGLA Winchester Palace Project Finds:

1 Senior Archaeologist  
2 Archaeologists (Grade 4)

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AND CONSERVATION/HBM SCOTLAND

Archaeologists required to assist in the publication of a series of excavations of Scottish Prehistoric Sites (three posts).

A background in British cultural prehistory is necessary and a specialist interest in artefacts, structures or ecofacts will be considered an advantage. A proven publication record is also necessary.

Fee Scale: 8-12,000, depending on experience.

Ref: AOC PUB 8990

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AOC are looking for 3-4 field archaeologists to assist with or supervise excavations in Scotland during 1990.

Standard HBM Fee Scales apply.

Ref: AOC EXSC 1990.

Apply in writing with CV, quoting relevant reference code to:

John Barber  
SDD/HBM (AOC)  
Room 201  
Fleming House  
28-31 Kinnaird Park  
Newcraighall  
Edinburgh  
EH15 3RD

**TRUST FOR WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY**  
requires  
**FOUR ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSPECTORS**

For a long-distance pipeline in Eastern England commencing in February 1990. The work will involve close monitoring of construction activities and assisting in the determination of archaeological responses. Temporary contracts, lasting approximately six months, are available for positions based either in Bedfordshire or Lincolnshire. The rate of pay will be £250 for a guaranteed 50-hour week. Additional hours and weekend working will regularly be required, paid at a rate of £5 per hour. Suitably qualified archaeologists, who have a current driving licence and who are members of IFA, should apply in writing with C.V. and names of two referees to:

**Peter Cox, Project Co-ordinator**  
Trust for Wessex Archaeology  
Portway House, South Portway Estate  
Old Sarum, Salisbury Wiltshire SP4 6EH.

Closing date for application: January 15, 1990.

**DIARY**

**Lunchtime Lectures (at 1.10pm):**

Friday 19th 'Current Excavations in the City'  
Simon Thompson

Friday 26th 'The Fleet Valley Project'  
Bill McCann

Friday 2nd Feb 'The Roman Public Building at Huggin Hill'  
Pete Rowsome

**PUBLIC ASSEMBLY**  
IN SUPPORT OF  
**AMBULANCE WORKERS**

**SATURDAY JANUARY 13**  
**1pm TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON**

The people of Britain have shown their support for ambulance workers through opinion polls, collections and the national petition. Now show your support in person.

Be there on January 13 to welcome ambulance workers as they march into Trafalgar Square.

Speeches and entertainment.

**TUC** ■ At the request of the ambulance unions, the march will consist only of ambulance and fire staff and their families.

Published by the Trades Union Congress. Printed by Maploworth & Clark Ltd.

		PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING PROJECTS																
15/12/1989		December			January 1990					February				March				
		11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	5	12	19	26	
Artillery Lane 4-10	EN														3	3	3	3
Billingsgate Bathhouse	ST	2	3		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
Bishopsgate/Spital Square	RE	3	6		6	8	12	12	12	12	12	12	12		12	12	12	12
Bow Churchyard 5	HB									10	10	10	10		10	10	10	10
Brook's Wharf	HB																	
Cannon Street 38	TN						3	3	3	3	3	3						
Coleman St. 64-66	EN																	
Eastcheap 30-40	EN																	
Gt. St. Thomas Apostle 13	RE	10	10		10	10	10	10										
Guildhall Yard	JM												4	4	4	4	4	4
Holborn Viaduct 45-50	EN																	
Leadenhall 145-146	HB	10	10															
Leadenhall 34-35	TN	0																
Leadenhall 78-79	HB	8	4		10	13	13	13	13	13	10	10	10					
Lime Street 20-21	EN														10	10	10	10
Ludgate Hill 25-27	TN/CP		2		6	6	6	6	6	6								
Merchant Taylors Hall	TN					2	2											
Pinners Hall	TN												12	12	12	12	12	12
Queen St/Skinners Lane 40	TN																	
Savage Gardens 25	HB									8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
St. Mary Axe 25-43	RE	12	12		12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	12	12	12	12	12
Vintry	EN/RE	2	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
W. Smithfield/Giltspur St.	TN	16	10															
Wardrobe Court	ST																	10
2 MISC TEST PITS	ALL	4	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
SUB-TOTAL REQUIRED		67	61	0	50	57	52	50	40	58	49	61	74	77	77	77	75	
<b>FLEET VALLEY</b>																		
Car Parks Area C2	RE																	
Car Parks Area D																		
Car Parks Area E																		
Car Parks Area F																		
Car Parks Area H																		
Section 7 10W		5	5		5													
Section 7 11W + 12W		10	10		10	10	5											
Section 7 10E + 11E + 12E		12	12		12	12												
Section 7 8W + 9W							10	10	10	10	5	5	5	5				
Section 7 13E + 13W		10	10		10	10												
Duffers							10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10				
Madeira Vaults						16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16					
Watching Brief		2	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2					
Timber/Stone recording		2	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
Blue Last																		
PC and APC		2	2		2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2		2	2	2	2
SUB-TOTAL FLEET VALLEY REQUIRED		43	43	0	43	54	47	42	42	42	37	37	35	19	4	4	4	4
TOTAL No. STAFF REQUIRED		110	104	0	93	111	99	92	82	100	86	98	109	96	81	81	79	
TOTAL No. STAFF AVAILABLE		113	98	0	93	107	107	107	107	107	110	110	110	110	116	116	11	
+=OVERSTAFFED; -=UNDER		3	-6	0	0	-4	8	15	25	7	24	12	1	14	35	35	37	
DATE		11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	5	12	19	26	
		December			January 1990					February				March				



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## NEWS DIGEST

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### DUA Strategic Plan: the debate

About 60 staff came to the first general consultative meeting and the Plan and current issues on 8 December. Four major issues were discussed, and I hope the following summary does justice to the points of view expressed. I am grateful for the number of written contributions, which are marked \* (so that people who were at the meeting will know where they came from).

**English Heritage and Competitive tendering:** the intention of English Heritage is to re-organise archaeology in Greater London, by divorcing the planning aspects (i.e. assessment of sites and specification of archaeological needs) from excavation. The Museum would become one of several archaeological contractors; this is said to be the modern practice elsewhere in the country. EH and MoL are to conduct a joint review which is to report by end of April 1990; the first meeting with EH about this (DUA delegates JS and JM) was on 14 December (see below).

These proposals were received with protest at the meeting, and in written submissions. EH say that it is unhealthy for the Museum to be both judge and jury in respect of archaeological sites; and that this could be challenged at a public enquiry. We say an analogy with the rescue services is more appropriate; you don't want rival lifeboat services. And our work can be, and is, assessed by outside archaeologists, including EH itself. EH spoke for the archaeology at the amphitheatre public enquiry, and MoL's costs were never questioned.

The meeting said we should not cut costs, though there are many ways in which we can cut corners (but according to others \* we are in danger of securing contracts by compromising excavation standards...). We might ask the Corporation for assistance in stipulating a framework of standards for excavation and finds work in the City. Although few have hope in using IFA at present, their embryonic code of practice for contract archaeology should be used by MoL. It asks, for instance, that the 'archaeologist' (in this case MoL) should satisfy herself/himself that the 'contractor' (e.g. OAU) has an adequate research design, and that the archaeologist should be given access onto site to monitor progress for that reason. Other comment included the arguments that \* we are deficient in anything but basic research drives, and that keeping all the data together is to be preferred academically; even if we are subjected to competition, the museum must keep its archive and type-series going as the basis of all London-wide research.

The section in the Plan on working outside the M25 got a universal thumbs-down. The meeting reiterated several times that our basic duty was to London and its archaeology, and there was enough room for improvement to keep us at home; and that it was difficult to see how doing any work outside London could help fight competition inside.

There are several other \* criticisms of the plan, some informed, others not: an alleged lack of an overt excavation strategy, the wisdom of treating the DUA like a commercial company, going too glossy on the PR, and needs for both a reasoned perspective on the history of the DUA (those in favour of this last need to explain why) and more on proposed developments in policy.

**Integration of DUA and DGLA:** There was overwhelming support for moves to integrate the two archaeological departments. Two areas have been marked for first discussions: post-excavation of site and finds, and planning and negotiation. A first meeting about bringing the post-ex sections closer together was held on 12 December, and agreed to conduct detailed exchanges of information and review possibilities in the areas of procedures and manuals, archive facilities and policies, reaction to LAR and joint publications. Then we might see what the best use of available accommodation, including Lever Street, might be.

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I will try to produce a second draft which incorporates many of these criticisms in the New Year. Certain areas will be identified for further discussion and the formulation of specific policies. It is important that changes flow from internal discussion.

### Sites which merit long-term preservation

We are pressing ahead with our drive, however belatedly, to provide some protection for a small number of sites in the City where deposits are deep and worthy of preservation. Three zones are currently in view: the waterfront, the Walbrook and the Fleet valleys. Within these zones an argument will be made for preserving deposits on selected sites during their inevitable redevelopment; we hope the Corporation will assist in persuading developers to avoid deep basements or to bridge over deposits on less threatening configurations of piles. The proposals on the waterfront build on the recently-finished waterfront area survey of deposits and present buildings by Val Horsman; we must survey the other areas before putting forward our proposals for them. The waterfront proposals go to the Corporation on 8 January 1990.

### English Heritage: meeting on 14 December

A meeting at Fortress House in Savile Row between EH and MoL discussed the EH proposals (they would say, intentions) to reform London archaeology. Seven topics were addressed:

1. There would be a strategic review of London archaeology, reviewing the various elements of the resource and the current state of knowledge. Terms of reference would be jointly drawn up, and then a suitable consultant would be jointly appointed. A document for Canterbury exists as a model and one is being prepared for York (by ex-DUA supervisor Steve Roskams and the Department of Archaeology at York University).
2. Gill Andrews, our well-respected HBMC monitor, is to be commissioned to conduct a survey of the publication backlogs of both departments (in our case, mainly post-1982 sites). After the specification of her brief in January, it is hoped she can do it in 1990/1, but without disturbing her work on the existing HBMC programmes.
3. EH is determined to divest DGLA of all its establishment grant, to fund its own taking over planning functions in the GL area. This it will run not by placing archaeologists in the boroughs (this has met with mighty indifference from the boroughs themselves) but now from within EH (i.e. presumably from Fortress House). Arguments that (i) this is foolishly impractical, (ii) it will cost EH far more than the current DGLA establishment grant, have fallen on deaf ears.
4. There is no timetable for the Monument Protection Programme for London (we submitted a first review in October 1988).
5. The SMR is to be discussed.
6. The Environmental Archaeology Service is to be reviewed during 1990/1.
7. Another (ex-Wessex) specialist is to scrutinise the DGLA funding, with a view to proposing changes in 1991/2.

Meetings concerning topics 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7, all involving our inspector Roger Thomas, are to be held in January, with a view to reporting back to the larger EH/MoL discussion group in February or March. As one MoL participant observed, coming away, "We've agreed so many meetings that they will be greatly slowed down."

I hope to summarise the case against the EH intentions for the February newsletter.

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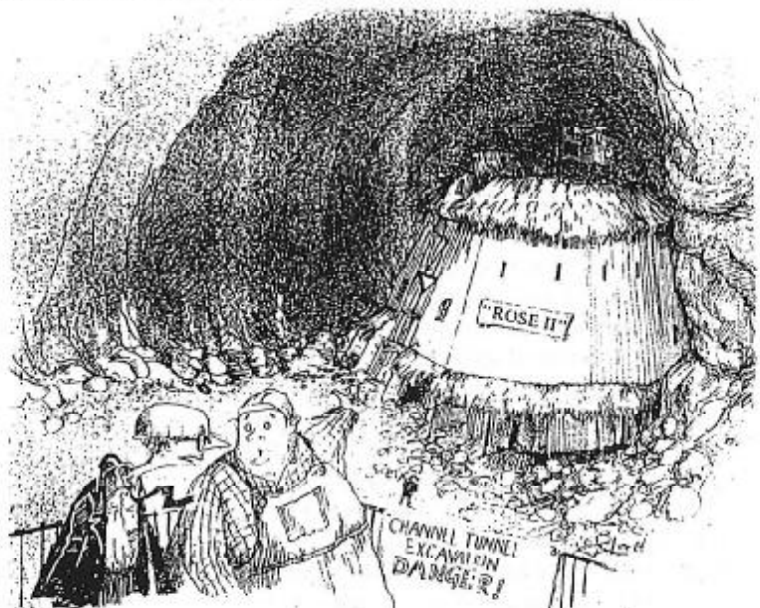
**COLAT**

The City of London Archaeological Trust is losing its Secretary, former Chief Admin Officer Ray Collins, from 31 March. We are looking for a part-time fund raiser, and in the meantime I shall be the temporary Secretary from 1 April. COLAT has been valuable in the past for specific fund-raising, especially for excavations such as Leadenhall Court. As we move into the post-HBMC period (analogies with the post-glacial or post-Roman periods are fascinating) we shall turn to COLAT to be an increasingly vigorous campaigner for London archaeology. Anybody who wishes to be concerned with fund-raising or who has good ideas should write to me without delay.

**How to Invade London, by J. Caesar**

Heffer's of Cambridge have sent somebody c/o the DUA a Loeb edition of Caesar's Gallic Wars, but without specifying who ordered it. If the anonymous Latin scholar will contact me, I can hand it over. A pity, perhaps, that we cannot fit swords to the wheels of the DUA van.

Happy New Year to all.

**John Schofield**

"Maybe if we covered it with sand and concrete people would forget that it's there".

**TRAINING NEWS**

Andrew Westman and Liz Shepherd will be running training sessions entitled "From Site to Archive" in January and February. They will explain the post-excavation process to Grade 3-4 staff. Final dates and times have not yet been arranged: watch the pigeon holes for further details.

The next Training Committee meeting will be on Tuesday 30th January at 10.00. All applications for funding should reach me in the Excavations Office by the end of Wednesday 24 January.

**Susan Greenwood**

**FINDS SECTION**

Alex Moore has been appointed Senior Archaeologist (Finds) on the Vintry site and is being assisted there by Tilly Webb. Angela Simic has returned to the Section after a lengthy illness. Fiona Pitt returned from holiday and was undaunted to find that here finds office on the St. Mary Axe site had been taken over by a huge amount of Roman painted wall plaster from a dumped deposit.

Fleet Valley Finds staff are in the process of moving from their accommodation at Burdett House into some portakabins on the adjacent site - thank you to all who have helped with this chore.

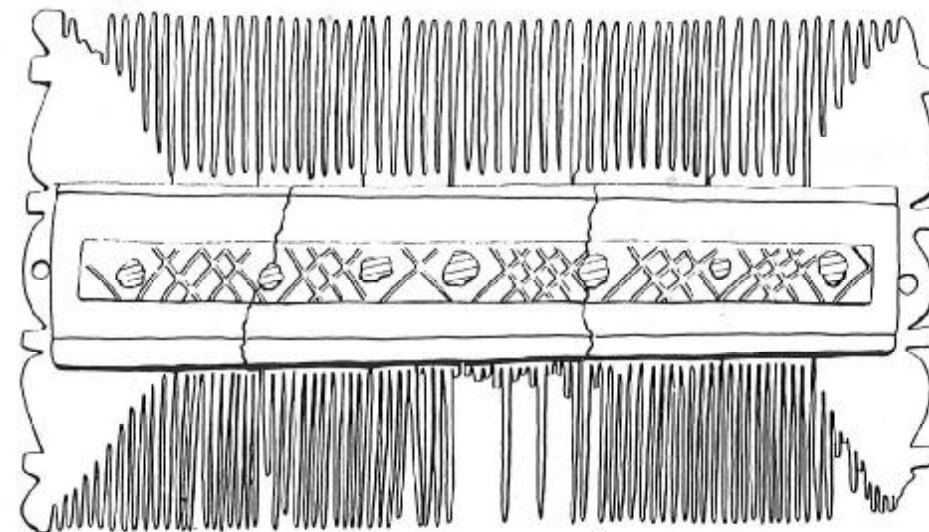
Several members of the Finds team, in conjunction with the Environmental Department, helped to put together a very successful evening display on the 22nd November for the MEPC funded group of sites.

We have once again been allocated the use of the new display cabinet in the foyer to exhibit current site material: this time Ruth Waller will display some of the Fleet Valley finds during January and February.

The Great St. Thomas The Apostle site yielded a most unusual disc-headed bone pin (the first of its kind from our sites) of mid-late Saxon date. This is a form which is usually made of copper alloy.

This month, the Giltspur Street site deserves special mention with regard to the quality of its finds. Yet another block of soil containing Roman jewellery has been lifted from a grave by the Conservation Lab. So far this is known to contain four copper bracelets and one silver earring. The other jewellery box mentioned in the last newsletter contains several shale and copper bracelets, silver earrings a ring and a pair of tweezers. The box itself can only be seen as a shadow on an X-ray plate.

Another noteworthy object from this site is a bone comb which was found beneath the skull of a skeleton. This is of the double-sided type with stepped profile and lattice decoration and is rather similar to the Pudding Lane example in the illustration.





Giltspur Street also yielded a whole but smashed stamped amphora as well as a total of seven complete or nearly complete pots recovered from graves. The much-sniffed and not unpleasant odour from one of these pots has now been identified as boring old diesel fuel.

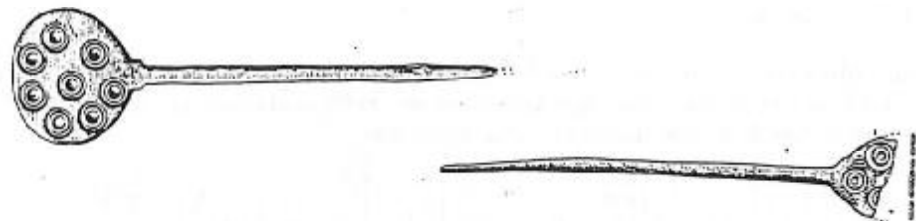
Finally, at this very moment, members of the Finds Section are converging on a west end restaurant for our annual Christmas outing (which normally takes place in January) and if I don't hurry I shall miss it.

**Penny MacConnoran**

### **A disc-headed pin from Great St. Thomas Apostle**

The pin has an enlarged square head with rounded corners, and is perforated and decorated with ring and dot designs on both faces and along the edges of the head.

Bone disc-headed pins, like a number of other pin forms, appear to imitate copper alloy types. Copper alloy disc-headed pins occur in the Middle and Late Saxon periods, the best-known example being the linked pin set from the river Witham in Lincolnshire. Several copper alloy examples were recovered from the Anglo-Saxon monastery of Whitby. It has been suggested that the type goes back to the Roman period, but this is unlikely. The metal series is customarily dated to the eighth and ninth centuries, which is of some interest with respect to the Great St. Thomas Apostle pin; but a bone pin of this type is also known from an eleventh century context at Lincoln. Several bone examples, largely lacking context, were recovered from Frisian terp excavations. It would appear that the Great St. Thomas pin is Anglo-Saxon, and of the Middle or late Saxon period. It would also repay further study, in view of the rarity of the type and its possible Middle Saxon date.



Copper alloy disc-headed pins from Whitby monastery

## **CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT**

### **Site work and follow-up:**

'Block lifting' on site has been limited to one object from Giltspur Street. Upon X-raying it, we were delighted to see it is another jewellery box! The first one lifted from the site has been further excavated in the lab: revealing gilded copper alloy bracelets, shale bracelets and a glass beads necklace, (which was transparent to the X-rays); also, there appears to be some iron fittings associated with the box. The X-ray of another block lifted from Giltspur Street shows a figure in relief on a Roman vessel. Unfortunately, the X-rays of these WES 89 copper alloy objects also reveal that the metals are in a very poor state. They will need extensive reconstruction or consolidation if they are to survive outside of their burial blocks. This is also the case with the Roman patera lifted from 145-146 Leadenhall Street. This long handled copper alloy pan luckily just fit into our X-ray facility.

The patera and several partially cleaned copper alloy objects and coins were displayed on site for the developers. Also exhibited there was an X-ray of a hobnail boot lifted from LEN 89.

Several composite finds from Vintry Wharf have been conserved this month as well as Post-med. ivory knife handles, comb, counter, med. copper alloy buckles and coins from Fleet Valley.

Work on polychromed pottery, domestic fittings and knives and shears continues for the publication program.

### **Meetings attended:**

Several staff from our department attended a seminar on the conservation of jewellery at the museum. It was organised by Tessa Murdoch (mod. dept.), who is putting together a temporary exhibition on jewellery through the ages - which will include some recent archaeological finds. Conservators from the V&A and the B.M. discussed the materials and work which they've encountered.

Kate and Jill picked up some useful tips at an ethnographic colloquium at the B.M.

Kate, Rob and Helen also took part in the Inaugural meeting of the Finds Group of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

**Season's Greetings from the Conservation lab and "Happy New Year!"**

### **"A brief note about the Medieval Archaeological Society AGM, on the 11th December at the Society of Antiquaries"**

Helen Clarke of UCL has been elected President of the Society, and as a first act, has suggested setting up a Research Sub-committee to explore the possibility of opening up a Research fund. Until now, the Society has only been able to support small applications for grants. However, this year, it cleared a profit of 35,000 pounds and the treasurer raised the question of a research fund to complement the smaller 'Fletcher Awards'. He stated that up to 2,500 pounds will be available a year simply from the interest on the Society's funds. Nothing dramatic, but worth bearing in mind.

The Editor reported that volume 33 will be the largest single issue for several years and is coming out in the New Year. Notes and suggestions for articles in Volume 34 are now requested as soon as possible.

The Secretary (One A. Vince) has invited *anyone* (including presumably, us!) who wishes to organise events in conjunction with the Society to contact him.

A lecture with the not-very-promising subject of ninth century Gallic trade with Ireland was given by the out-going President A.C. Thomas. He contrived however to make it remarkably diverting and interesting, definitely an old-trouper.

Although the rarefied atmosphere of those marble halls are not exactly our style, it costs little to join the Medieval Archaeological Society and thus get a look-in on events which have a bearing on our fate. For example, it is the Society that is liaising with HBMC towards the HBMC five-year plan (sounds alarming) on the future and funding of Medieval Archaeology, of which the DUA/DGLA has found not a little. I have a copy of the discussion draft, should anyone wish to make a copy of it.

Mark Samuel

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## CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

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### REVIEW OF TAG89

TAG's first foray into classical archaeology focussed on two issues: the relationship between material and literary evidence, and what pottery represents.

Tim Taylor's paper, voted 'best title of the conference', described 'the four gender roles of the Scythians'. He touched among other exotica on 'six reasons for Scythian impotence', osteological evidence for absence of one of the breasts and divinatory trance induced by inhaling cannabis vapours. He was comparing evidence from tombs in the central Asian steppes with contemporary accounts of the Scythians written by Herodotus and other Greeks. Like any ethnographers, the latter are apt to tell us as much about themselves as about their subjects; our neglect so far of certain aspects of their written accounts in interpreting the tombs says something about *us*. These accounts suggest that we should look among the Scythians not only for male men and female women, but also for 'female' men and 'male' women. In Kurgan, 20% of horse-riders buried with bows were anatomically women, perhaps 'Amazons'. No one had yet reported, or looked for, anatomical men buried with 'female' artefacts, despite contemporary literary evidence and recent central Asian and north American ethnographic parallels for transvestite shamen. Taylor suggested that individuals could have moved from one role to another: the role of shaman diviner ('female' man) might have been chosen late in life by a clapped-out old warrior (male man).

Hugh Bowden showed with admirable matrix-like sequence diagrams how the long-accepted chronology of Greek painted pottery had been established by only a single date, the foundation of a certain colony in Sicily, computed from a vague reference in Thucydides. Other

more recent evidence suggested that the pottery could be up to 40 years older. Trying this 'recalibrated' chronology in the case of another colony, Naucratis, Bowden obtained as good if not a better fit between 'pottery events' and historically-attested events as existed previously.

One problem was, how would an event such as the foundation of a colony be represented by pottery? The first settlement might have been preceded by unrecorded culture contact, either trade of goods in pots or equally possibly aceramic. And what if the graves of the founders of the colony contained only old pottery, brought from the 'old country'? Michael Vickers reminded us that, according to literary evidence, painted pottery hadn't been as up-market as vessels of gold or silver, yet in the virtual archaeological absence of the latter we tended to overrate the pottery.

Karen Griffiths and David Gill examined the significance of the distribution of various kinds of Roman pottery among Romano-British villas in Northamptonshire and on the Greek peninsula of Methana, respectively. Either Samian wasn't a fineware at all, or else wealth was surprisingly well-distributed. Perhaps every small estate, town and harbour was trading with every other; all buying pottery and paying taxes in a relatively monetised economy. Taxes and other dues could have been paid in kind, of course, especially anywhere near the army. Written evidence existed for administration, but needed at least as much scruple and scepticism in its interpretation as did mute pottery or burials.

'Making Sense of Space', chaired by Robin Boast, suffered from a lack of novel contributions, except for John Chapman's application of spatial analysis to neolithic village sites in Bulgaria. The villagers are assumed to have been relatively egalitarian, yet the contemporary cemetery at Varna suggested increasing disparity of wealth. Chapman analysed: the ratio between built and unbuilt space (very dense); the size of buildings (most variable); the spacing between buildings (least variable); the 'depth' and accessibility of rooms from the entrances of a building ('gamma' analysis of Hillier and Hanson); and the number of entrances to a building ('alpha').

Chapman showed two interesting plans. In the first he plotted the minimum number of straight lines in external areas between buildings, indicating axes of inter-visibility, although he acknowledged that inter-audibility was likely to have been just as important to the inhabitants; and in the other he plotted the minimum number of convex spaces or whole blocks of space into which the same external areas could be subdivided, relating these to adjoining entrances to buildings. Two distinct patterns emerged, especially when trends and cycles of development were included in the analysis. Chapman interpreted these as implying two forms of social control, one of which was characterised by bigger buildings and was longer-lasting. He declined to identify these as the rich dead of Varna, however.

Frank Brown demonstrated a technique, dissecting and packing rectangles, by which he analysed the interrelationship of rectilinear spaces. If you examined 4 spaces the number of possible arrangements was manageably few (7); you wouldn't use this technique for as many as 10 spaces (nearly 500,000 permutations!). As a test case, he compared the arrangement of rooms in pre-1914 terrace houses, inter-war 2-storey council semi-detached houses and spec-built semis. The conditions leading to an interesting variety of plan in the council semi were well-documented, although hope for a well-housed, healthy and peaceful work force was stated in the political rather than in the architectural brief. Brown noted how the spec-built semi tended to greater uniformity: the range of possible plans was markedly constrained by placing the two front doors of adjoining houses as far apart as possible. He presumed that this was desired, or promoted, because it made each semi more closely resemble the ideal fully-detached house. Different entrances can have different social use and meaning. In discussion, the social role of 'front door', for strangers, important visitors and men,



was distinguished from 'back door', for friends, neighbours and women.

Malcolm Cooper's and James Huggett's appeal for a methodology for post-excavation spatial analysis of deeply-stratified urban sites might have been of most direct relevance to the DUA. Although matrix and seriation diagrams had valuable uses there existed, unfortunately, no simple clear way to diagrammatically represent both space and time. They distinguished physical space, the physical framework, from behavioural space, how space was actually used. Deposition, of course, was often a 'lateral' kind of activity, constrained by the layout of physical and behavioural space, rather than a 'vertical', accumulative activity. They cited a cautionary counter-example of vertical deposition, however: animal bones on the surface of a Roman street in Worcester were so undamaged as to suggest that they must derive from overlying Saxon 'dark earth'.

Just as urban rescue excavation was led by commercial redevelopment, so they feared that post-excavation spatial and sequential analysis was led by what computer technology was available. They would like at least one urban *research* excavation before we are all overwhelmed by the sheer quantity of contexts. Some hope!

Malcolm Reid attempted to shock us into thinking more about architecture by showing a slide of the front door of Fortress House, and Tom Saunders qualified his own preferred Marxist interpretation of the early medieval nucleation of villages, exemplified in the landscape of Raunds and Wharram Percy, by citing the introduction of the large, wheeled plough.

In the almost indistinguishable session, 'Social Archaeology of Houses', I particularly liked Matthew Johnson's rapid survey of the variant approaches to interpreting post-medieval vernacular buildings. The 'architectural historian' (such as Brunskill) developed regional typologies, while the 'economist' (Hoskins or Barley) saw yeomen rebuilding their houses around 1600, and provincial conservatism in direct proportion to distance from London, respectively. Different priorities, or *idees fixes*, prevailed on the east coast of the United States and at the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires in Paris. Basic recording was factually 'good', but was interpreted and put to historical uses apt only for a certain time and place.

Andrew Westman

### 'Sacred and Profane: Archaeology, Ritual and Religion'

This was held in Oxford, on the weekend of 28th-29th October. Jeremy Oetgen (Field), Fiona Pitt (Finds), Andrea Hofmann and William Forde (Environment) were funded by the training committee to attend. The aim of the conference was:

*'to be a platform for the presentation and discussion of new research in the field of archaeology, ritual and religion; particularly with regard to the interpretation and explanation of ritual practice and systems of religious belief as represented in, and as structuring the material world'*

The consensus of the DUA delegation was that there is a tendency to place too much emphasis on functional interpretation in the urban context, and that 'ritual use' was explained in a mechanistic way. The conference was seen therefore as providing two major uses: a discussion of the ways in which ritual might be in some way defined, and following on from this premise, the ways in which ritual activity might be identified on site.

The 'tip-toe' approach was applied to the problem of attempting to isolate that which is ritual

and that which is not, complicated by the use of terms which are polar opposites (eg Sacred/Profane, Religions/Secular). There were attempts to get at the problems of using these concepts, some more successful than others. Simon Kaner (Cambridge) provided a spectacular and at times highly animated attack on structuralist interpretations of 'le totemism' with specific reference to Japanese material. Douglas Bailey's (Cambridge) paper compared archaeological practices to those of the church, accompanied by an eye opening series of slides, putting religion into a perspective which was readily identifiable to those congregated.

These were the most accessible theoretical debates, of which there should have been more as pretending these issues do not exist produces stagnant and formulated interpretations of the available archaeological evidence. The paper presented by Chris Chippendale (Cambridge) on Franco-Italian rock carvings was in this vein, relying on a rather simplistic semiotic interpretation. When challenged with potentially convincing evidence against the interpretation, he declared that 'the search for meaning in prehistory is a delusion, and I am really not interested in it'. Enough said. On a more positive note, Inge Mortenson (Carlsberg Foundation) established an awareness of the problems of interpreting symbolic meaning through time, in her paper on Syrian gravestones. It was also encouraging to hear Eleanor Scott (Newcastle) having the courage, through her paper on animal and child burials in Romano-British Villas to suggest that the supposedly cool and calculating Romans may have lowered themselves to indulge in base ritual acts.

In conclusion, Sacred and Profane had the potential to be a useful platform for enquiry into the problems associated with ritual and religion in archaeology. The end result was marred however, by a reluctance to get to grips with the key issues behind the evidence and also by insufficient discussion time after each session.

Abstracts and papers are available for viewing, if interested.

J. Oetgen, F. Pitt, A. Hofmann, W. Forde

### "HARRIS MATRIX" - SISTEMES DE REGISTRE EN ARQUEOLOGIA (*"HARRIS MATRIX" - RECORDING SYSTEMS IN ARCHAEOLOGY*)

GIRONA, CATALUNYA, (SPAIN)

This conference took place in the city of Girona between 28th to 30th of November, 1989. Girona is about one hour's drive north of Barcelona. The conference was organised by the Catalan Archaeological Society, who invited four Catalan archaeologists together with Edward Harris and myself to present papers, on the subject of recording systems, to an audience of around 100 professional archaeologists and students. I flew to Barcelona on Sunday 26th, eventually arriving about three hours late having missed the final check-in time of my first flight by two minutes! (Incidentally the Catalan Archaeological Society paid for the flight and all accommodation in Spain, no costs were charged to the DUA).

I was met at the airport by a couple of archaeologists who didn't know what I looked like and had forgotten to bring their 'Mr. Spence' sign. They eventually made contact with me when one of them fell over my bags and on the way down read my baggage label: a display of organisational ability archaeologists the world over would be proud of. We spent the first night in Barcelona having a 'typical Catalan' meal with the President of the Society, the



organisers of the conference and half-a-dozen archaeologists. Ed Harris showed his true colours after the meal by insisting that we all find a bar for more drinks....

**Monday 27th:** Harris and myself spent the morning touring the Gothic part of the old city of Barcelona. We were shown the current excavations at the front of the Cathedral, an area just outside the Roman and medieval city walls. The scene was reminiscent of a DUA excavation with contractors and machines taking an active part in the 'excavation' process. We were then taken on a tour of the subterranean display of the Roman city. Almost an entire insula is on display to the public, we were also shown the remains of two further insulae that are not yet on public display, these are beneath the medieval palace and cathedral. The imaginative use of mirrors (to visually extend the length of the streets) and lasers (to demonstrate various contemporary ground levels) appeared to be effective methods of conveying information to visitors.

We then experienced our first "typical Catalan" lunch/siesta in the company of the secretary-general of the Society. An administrator whose eagerness to promote the marketing of Catalonian archaeology/history appeared to be being encouraged by contacts made through the Council of Europe with representatives of English Heritage, (has anyone considered carrying out a Heritage Impact Assessment on EH's effect on Europe following 1992 and the opening of the Channel Tunnel?)

In the evening we were asked to provide a short address to the members of the Society at the Archaeological Museum of Barcelona, this involved meeting the Director of the Museum and receiving the first of several gifts in the form of publications, most in Catalan, that we were to be given during the week, (all available for viewing from me in Bridge House).

**Tuesday 28th:** The first day of the conference began with panic when the simultaneous translator failed to materialise, however following the conference introduction he did appear and provided the only real means of anyone understanding anyone else throughout the conference.

Harris gave the first lecture, describing how he had come to "invent" the matrix as a result of his work in attempting to analyse the incomplete records from the Brook Street excavations in Winchester which were carried out in 1973. The conference was primarily of a technical nature so Harris concluded his first lecture with a quick run through of stratigraphic laws, which are well described in the new 2nd edition of his book, 'The Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy', (recommended reading for all of you who think you might be archaeologists).

The following lecture was given by Josep Ma. Nolla, Professor of Archaeology at the University of Girona. He outlined the history of stratigraphic excavation in Catalonia, which had apparently begun some ten years earlier with the aid of a British archaeologist, Simon Keays. Since that time a number of recording systems had been devised, apparently to deal with the differing requirements of particular excavations.

After a "typical Catalan" lunch/siesta, we all toured Girona: the old part of the city is beautiful, with a magnificent cathedral and many winding alleyways which pass between stone built medieval houses. After siesta Harris expanded on the uses of stratigraphic sequence in the collection and understanding of archaeological data. He accompanied his lecture with a test, asking individuals to number-up a section and then construct a matrix. The Catalonians were one step ahead being reasonably adept at constructing the matrix but arguing incessantly about the need to record interfaces, a topic which was to be discussed repeatedly throughout the conference.

**Wednesday 29th:** My big day, the morning was spent in a description of the work of the DUA and the basic elements of the recording system. I began with a simple account of the history of London, through the archaeological evidence, an easy introduction much appreciated by those who had enjoyed a "typical Catalan" social evening the previous day!

The second lecture was given by Joaquin Ruiz de Arbulo of the Taller Escola d'Arqueologia (the workshop school of archaeology) of Tarragona. This was established three years ago to provide work for around fifty unemployed local young people, the scheme however differed drastically from British MSC/YTS schemes in several ways. The scheme lasted for three years, provided serious training for all the participants by carrying out important excavation, restoration and education work on the archaeology of the city and was designed to lead to direct employment for the participants, as guides and educators, in the museums and monuments of the city. The archaeological system Ruiz described was remarkably similar to the DUA's system, both for site records and finds cataloguing, he claimed this was a case of parallel development, and I'm inclined to more or less believe him.

After a "typical Catalan" lunch/siesta I gave a lecture, which in some ways resembled a 'training session', in on-site recording and post-ex' analysis. All seemed pleased with the presentation, particularly the discussion of how to 'phase' the matrix, the construction of Land-Use diagrams and the computer archiving system. Afterwards a group of Catalan archaeologists invited the English to try some of the "typical Catalan" bars, beers and food of Girona.

**Thursday 30th:** Harris was due to start the last day of the conference with a lecture entitled "Some applications of the Harris Matrix", however, due to a "typical Catalan" hang-over (shared by a large part of the audience) he spent some time showing slides of Bermuda, (he is Director of the Bermuda Maritime Museum), and then re-emphasised the use and universality of basic approaches to archaeological stratigraphy.

Juan Lopez then provided a review of the recording systems (which varied from site to site) of the Centre d'Investigacions Arqueològiques de Girona. The system had certain parallels with the DUA system, especially in the use of different recording sheets for deposits, cuts and masonry. But, unfortunately, the process of excavation appeared to be influenced by a perceived need to define buildings in an interpretative way before recording began. It is possible that the development of this excessively interpretive approach had come about by a lack of information concerning the function of the matrix during post-excavation, not really surprising considering the total absence of published material on this subject.

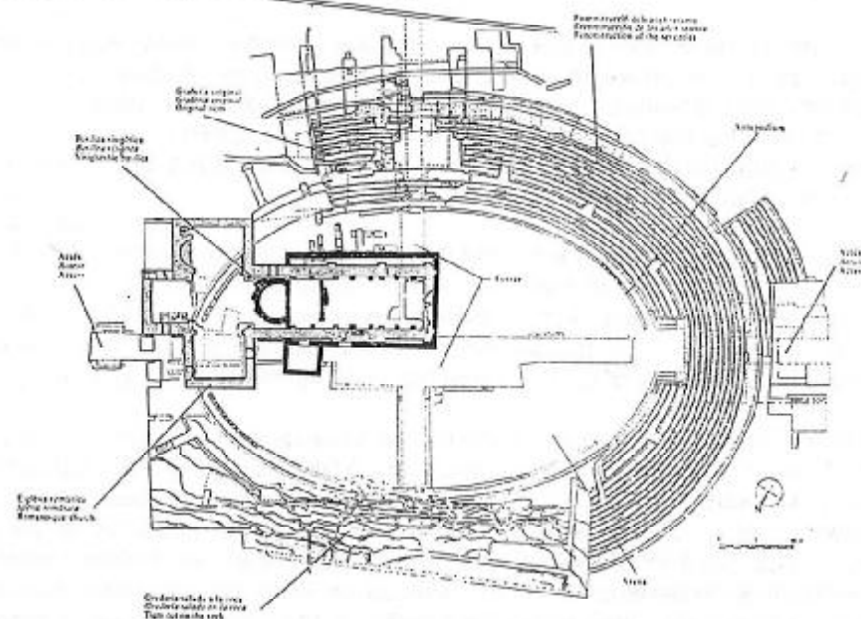
The last lecture of the conference was by Josep Ma. Solias who recounted the methods used to record the prison building of the Spanish Inquisition in Cuenca in central Spain. The recording involved both excavation and the recording of the standing building. The prison had been used by first the Inquisition and then by Franco's interrogators. It had been possible to discover how the building had functioned and some evidence of both those who were imprisoned and the tortures they suffered was recorded from the numerous examples of graffiti in the cells of the prison. The irony of this project was that the building was being refurbished to become the archive of the national records associated with the Inquisition, however, the work itself had removed all but one example of the graffiti of the victims of the Inquisition.

The conference was considered to have been a great success, many analysis and the recording of inter-faces. It was extremely interesting to talk to the Catalan archaeologists. Their enthusiasm for their work, in the face of administrative apathy, public ignorance,

political self-interest and the promotion of damaging marketing strategies, was encouraging. It would be nice to think that the archaeologists in the DUA felt a similar enthusiasm despite the many similar problems faced in London.

The proceedings of the conference, together with other material, notably a Catalan translation of the DUA Site Manual, will be published in the first issue of a new Catalan archaeological techniques monograph series. The monograph is usefully printed in both Catalan and English, it should be available in January 1990.

**Friday 1st:** With the conference completed the day was one of 'official visits', first to the Greek trading colony of Empurie which, together with the later Roman city, provides a magnificent site of preserved walls, buildings and mosaics. The afternoon consisted of another 'typical Catalan' lunch/siest followed by a visit to the excavations at L'illa d'en Reixac (Iberian Iron Age) and the associated oppidum of Ullastret. The latter an impressive masonry monument but which suffers from the problems all such archaeological parks are prone to in terms of interpretation and display.



The rest of my stay in Catalonia was holiday so what I did is none of your business, however, I did spend a day at Tarragona which is worth mentioning. The monumental Roman remains are some of the best preserved outside of North Africa and the Near East. The amphitheatre, constructed at the beginning of the second century AD, is superbly preserved and contains evidence for a Visigothic basilica sited on the place of a third century Christian martyrdom. The basilica was later replaced by a, now ruined, romanesque church. The amphitheatre is of particular interest in that it is (give or take a few metres) identical in size to the London amphitheatre.

The medieval town was primarily constructed within the walls of the Roman circus. The circus therefore survives in the form of vaults within each medieval property, in most cases to second floor level. The south-eastern corner survives almost intact and the decorated arcading and massive (7 metres high) access tunnels were extremely impressive. Basically if you're ever in Barcelona get the train (1 hour) to Tarragona and see it for yourself!

Craig Spence

## DUA Excavation News



Current sites: December 1989

### 1. Fleet Valley

Nine trenches are currently being excavated in the area of the Old Seacoal Lane arches. They are situated both in and outside the N-E corner of the perimeter wall of the Fleet Prison, which has been located in one of them. A number of features are being excavated in the internal prison area. In the outer area a number of foundations of medieval buildings have been uncovered. One of them contains an in situ medieval doorway constructed from reigate stone; this may have been the entrance to an undercroft. From the back-to-back chimney stack excavated last month, an almost complete lancet-window moulding has been recovered. Carved in one block, this probably dates to the 13th century.

### 2. 13-14 Great St Thomas Apostle

Excavation began on 24th November and work to date has revealed a sequence of 17th to 18th century brick floored cellars with associated drains and cess pits covering the eastern half of the site. The wall forming the present property boundary along the western edge of the site has also survived from this date and probably represents the rebuilding that took place after the Great Fire (1666). Features excavated within the eastern half of the site consist of a series of late Saxon rubbish pits from which have been recovered a rare bone disc-headed pin, perforated and decorated with ring and dot designs and fragments of snake skin.

### 3. 1 Wardrobe Place

The excavation of a new foundation trench for the south wall of the building revealed a number of archaeological features: Romano-British fluvial deposits probably represent infill of the stream channel, whose width is estimated as 10m. Over this was located a chalk rubble wall foundation, probably medieval, and possibly part of the King's Wardrobe. The top part of this wall was robbed out during the 17/18th century, and above this lay post-medieval dumping.

### 4. Billingsgate Bath House

The recording has been carried out of the original Roman masonry beneath the 1960's consolidation, and of the pilae in the Caldarium and Tepidarium, and the suspended Tepidarium floor. The Nimbus conservators are in the process of reconstructing and consolidating these features. Two trial pits were opened in the North wing to assess the extent of wooden pile survival. Seeping water which flooded part of the site poses a serious threat to the survival of the monument.

NO FURTHER SITE SUMMARIES HAVE BEEN RECEIVED - WHERE ARE THEY?



## PRESS CUTTINGS

## Roman docks found on Guy's site

By Simon Tait  
Arts Correspondent

One of the largest Roman docks complexes to be found in Britain has been unearthed in the grounds of Guy's Hospital, Southwark, 30 metres from the edge of the Thames. But it is causing problems to an £84 million hospital development waiting to go on the site.

Miss Sandra Carnell, project director for the scheme, which will provide new out-patient and clinic care on seven storeys, said: "We are keen to help and have funded the present investigations, and we hope to be able to display items found on the site in the new building, but it has meant recasting the development project." The scheme is being funded by a mixture of private and health service money.

The Museum of London archaeologists have found a 60ft stretch of oaken beams and planks in a complicated construction, which represents a key to a big Roman settlement known to have existed on high ground under what is now Borough High Street.

"We never expected to find anything like this," Mr Robin Wilson, supervising archaeologist, said. "What we have is a submerged dock or quay development unparalleled in Britain as far as we know".

The archaeologists were expecting to find the course of what has become known as Guy's Channel, probably the largest of dozens of Thames tributaries which laced the south bank mudflats 2,000 years ago, whose existence was known about but never established. Instead, they have discovered what may be the main service point for the town.

"We are extremely grateful for the help the hospital has given on what is turning out to be a very important site," Mr Harvey Sheldon, head of the Museum of London's department of greater London archaeology, said.



Museum of London archaeologists examining the oak structure in Guy's Hospital grounds.

THE TIMES, 6/12/89.

## The threat to finding London's history

30 DEC. 89. FINANCIAL TIMES.

**S**OUTHWARK HAS just produced another major addition to the history of London: a well-preserved, oak-timbered Roman wharf at Guy's Hospital, London Bridge, on the south side of the Thames. It is between 1,600 and 1,900 years old and 10 metres long and its discovery is a further triumph for the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology (DGLA).

There is, however, a serious threat to the prospect of more finds like this. English Heritage (EH) proposes to reorganise London archaeology, giving itself the key role the museum now fulfils with skill, diplomacy, scholarship and success.

Guy's Hospital is a difficult DGLA project, funded by the developer, South East Thames Regional Health Authority, in advance of new buildings for the hospital. The diggers discovered a river channel, to be called Guy's Channel, two metres below ground level. The quay fronts on to it, and we may imagine wine, olive oil fish paste from the Continent being unloaded at this convenient spot downstream of the original London Bridge.

Many repairs show the quay had a long life. Its timber is in excellent condition, some stained dark by the mud, some the light yellow-brown of oak cut yesterday. Tree ring dating at the museum will give the felling dates and fix the sequence of repairs.

Finding this quay means a small change to the map of the gravel and sand banks (eyots) that make up the "high" ground in Southwark. The Romans put wharves where they could on the eyots between the channels. Plot the wharves and you have the lie of the land. Behind the wharves were warehouses, like the huge one beneath the Courty brewery site near the FT's headquarters.

But will the DGLA be allowed to continue such fine

work? Simon Hughes, SLD MP for Southwark and Bermondsey, has said that EH's announcement that it will review London archaeology is "a quango bidding for more authority."

EH maintains that the number of expensive digs needs to be reduced, developers' costs need to be cut, and crises such as happened at the Rose Theatre this past summer must be avoided. It proposes that it (EH) should be the advisory body for London archaeology, advising on one hand the developers and on the other London planners.

Wherever it could it would eliminate digging, aiming to preserve buried remains for another generation to dig (I suppose in 30 years time when redevelopment next hits the site).

If there was digging to be done, it would be put out to tender and the Museum of London invited to compete with other archaeological groups, such as the Oxford Unit that has just put in a bid for a dig on the Old Kent Road. Recommending the best team would, of course, also fall to EH.

If conflict arose when important finds appeared - as at the Rose - EH would then advise the Department of the Environment, as a disinterested arbiter in a cause where it had already had its say.

The museum's DGLA would cease to be the advisory body in London, and the Museum would lose its annual grant of £400,000 for that work, which EH now pays following the demise of the GLC.

So far EH has only sketched its proposals, but they are

enough to cause alarm. Are they really trying to promote London's history? What is behind their sudden concern for developers? Have they realised that Nicholas Ridley is no longer environment secretary?

The core issue is more than an argument about budgets and staffing. At dispute is how best to look after London's archaeology, and ensure that as much as possible of the fragile history of one of the world's great cities either is safeguarded for later research or is dug and studied before bulldozers grub it up.

Archaeology is the only way

*Gerald Cadogan  
on proposals to  
reorganise  
London digs*

left to make substantial gains in the history of London. Digging produces major discoveries, as we have seen with the Globe, the Rose, Guy's Hospital Roman wharf and the Huggin Hill Roman baths.

So long as redevelopment continues, there will be more such results that give a new understanding of the story of London.

Which means digging now, in practical terms. It is a lovely-sounding idea to preserve sites for others to dig (and cut the current developers' digging costs) but hardly thought out. It would mean cancelling basements and underground car parks, on the grounds of saving the archaeology. Developers will not accept that. It will

force buildings to go higher to achieve the same site density, which planners will not want.

London's archaeology is the envy of the rest of Europe. At present, the usual pattern is digging and recording, followed by bulldozers and building. It is cheap and efficient for the developer.

The system works by co-operation between developers and diggers (defined in a joint code of practice) and between diggers and London borough planners. It is not ideal in the sense that rescue digging is never ideal. But if things are not dug, the bulldozers take them anyway.

Exposing them and then covering them with preservatives, however up to date, is not the answer as even the most modern methods do not stop deterioration - as happened at the Rose.

In 1983 the GLC set up and started paying for the Greater London Archaeological Service (GLAS) which the Museum of London's DGLA runs for 27 of the 32 Boroughs, with responsibility for carrying out the rescue work, and the Passmore Edwards museum does for the other five.

(The Museum of London has also a separate Department of Urban Archaeology for work in the City of London.) GLAS has gone from strength to strength, developing good working relationships with the boroughs, and making great finds. In 1986 its funding passed to EH.

So why change the system? EH would say because it had no statutory base. When the GLC went, the rights passed to them, and it is time now to exercise them.

Contd  
→





The Roman wharf at Guy's Hospital

Ashley Astwood

But why remove a system that works well, particularly for the borough planners who have written to EH to voice their concern at the new proposals? They do not have the archaeological expertise themselves, nor the money to buy it in, but are happy with the service they get from the two museums.

In a business that values experience EH would have to start from scratch by building new relationships. It would have to keep more staff in London, in spite of the announced intention of moving them out.

Nor is EH likely to provide a cheaper service. The DGLA budget for 1988-89 was £2.3m, of which EH paid £400,000 as the establishment grant (the old

GLC grant) and £300,000 as grant aid for projects. The developers paid the bulk of the money.

Competitive tendering, or contract archaeology, has long been popular in the US and has an obvious Thatcherite appeal. It may lead to lower costs for developers, whose profits EH is so keen to help, but they will not be that much lower. And it will certainly produce a savage loss of morale among the Museum of London teams. Already precarious terms of employment, which they accept for love of the work, will become worse as digging groups compete. There will be no chance to develop the depths of knowledge and powers of decision which one

acquires only by working in one place for a long time, and which are what borough planners value most.

But the main charge against EH is that the overall view will disappear and London's archaeology will suffer. The Museum diggers would welcome some outsiders, but stand firm that the prime responsibility should stay at its natural home, London's own museum and archaeological research centre.

EH's reasoning is difficult to fathom. Many archaeologists wonder how committed EH is to archaeology at all. Lord Montagu of Beaulieu has only one archaeologist among his Commissioners; the post of Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments has been axed; EH refused to recommend that the Rose be scheduled as an Ancient Monument, which makes nonsense of the monuments legislation; and Jennifer Page, new chief executive, has had a career in the Civil Service, BritOil, London Docklands Development Corporation and financial services.

More archaeologists in high places in EH might have led to a better outcome to the Rose Theatre drama, which has soured relations between EH and the Museum of London.

At the worst moment, EH ordered the Museum team off the dig, where they were doing another perfectly good job but did not wish to dig the little holes EH wanted, when a site of such importance demanded area excavation.

Blame has been spread widely, from the Commissioners of EH to the developers to the Museum of London diggers. The difficulties began when Imry Merchant Developers bought the site from Heron Corporation.

Heron had agreed to a two months' archaeological evaluation to be followed by more investigation if agreed to be necessary. But Imry offered only the two months flat. Take

it or leave it, this was not negotiable - until the actors (unprompted) made such an uproar that Imry began to negotiate.

Then came the rows between EH and the Museum of London. Eventually EH stopped the dig at an "arbitrary and illogical point", says Martin Biddle, in the latest issue of *Antiquity*. Many questions are unanswered, especially how the stage and the trap doors worked. If the Museum of London team had carried on, we should know a lot more.

EH's intention is apparently to present it, in a giant basement, without further substantial digging. But that depends largely on the attitudes of Marketchief plc, the Danish controlled company that recently bought Imry. The Danes may have other ideas (remembering that it is the Rose-style of acting that the players parody in Hamlet).

What the Rose needs is more digging. For us taxpayers, for whom the greatest value of the Rose and the Globe is to learn how precisely the playing was done, the results of digging are more valuable than scrappy half-cleared ruins. Dig them thoroughly and with scholarship - a word we do not hear much of from EH. Then, after finding all that is there, present it. But please do not present a half-done job, or allow any suspicion that that is what we may be getting.

The Rose is a sad story, and does not induce confidence in EH running London's archaeology. Keep it with the Museum of London, and follow the American adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

One change that will improve the system is to encourage, or even require, developers to have the archaeology done before submitting final planning applications. Hanson Properties has done this at the Globe. It saves a lot of trouble.