

London Archaeological Prize 2016

The winners of this prestigious biennial prize (often known as the Publication Prize) were announced at the London Archaeological Forum on Monday 28th November by the chair of judges, Peter Rowsome and the prize administrator Alison Telfer.

It was a very close contest – after extended deliberation and a tie break vote, only one point separated the first prize and runner up, and only three points separated the first five shortlisted entries.

All the publications are listed below, with details of author(s) and publisher, and the submission information provided by the nominator in each case. We have also given a comment from a judge for each entry to give a flavour of their assessment.

★The winner, receiving a certificate and cheque for £250, is:

‘Temples and Suburbs, Excavations at Tabard Square, Southwark’, published by PCA in 2015

Principal author Dougie Killock, with John Shepherd, James Gerrard, Kevin Hayward, Kevin Rielly and Victoria Ridgeway

This is a report on the excavation and discovery of a major Roman temple complex in Southwark and its associated finds, some of which are of international importance, such as the first inscription to name Londoners and the deity Mars *Camulus*. The book discusses the site in the context of Roman London and its wider implications, besides adding to the knowledge of Roman Southwark and its development.

Judge’s comment: Tabard Square is an excellent volume which looks at the excavation and places it in a wider regional context, and considers nearby sites. Tabard Square has revolutionised our expectations for the archaeology of Southwark and a number of other sites which have confirmed these great expectations.

NB Douglas Killock will be interviewed for a feature in *London Archaeologist’s* ‘Author, author...’ series to be published in the spring 2017 issue

★The runner-up, receiving a certificate and cheque for £100, is:

‘Roman Sculpture from London and the South-East, CSIR (Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani) Volume I, Fascicule 10’, British Academy, 2015

Penny Coombe, Francis Grew, Kevin Hayward and Martin Henig

This is the penultimate fascicule in the series and its main component concerns sculptures from Greater London. This long-awaited volume has been a major undertaking, seeking out sculptures, taking photographs and producing entries for each sculptural piece. This particular fascicule has been enhanced by stone analyses for each piece and the location of quarries and their chronological use, something not included in earlier volumes. The authors are accepted specialists with Francis Grew as main editor.

Judge’s comment: A reference work of importance for anyone working on Roman Britain as well as London, and a pleasure to use.

★The three publications cited with honourable mentions are (in no particular order):

‘The Spitalfields suburb 1539–c 1880: excavations at Spitalfields Market, London E1, 1991–2007’, MOLA, 2015

Chiz Harward, Nick Holder and Nigel Jeffries

This book presents the story of this fascinating area and its people by integrating evidence from a very large (four hectare) excavation site. Linking discarded rubbish to the documented households that once owned these items throws fresh light on the diverse lives of those living and working here. Individual stories are told against a detailed backdrop of the neighbourhood’s development and redevelopment over more than three centuries from Tudor courtiers to 19th-century East End poverty.

Judge’s comment: Particularly outstanding integration of documentary evidence with archaeological finds; develops a way of ‘storytelling’ to integrate wide range of information. Well-written text which is easy to follow despite complexity of the material. Very high production values.

'The Thames Iron Works 1837–1912: a major shipbuilder on the Thames investigated', MOLA and Crossrail, 2015

Danny Harrison (MOLA)

The Thames Iron Works and Shipbuilding Company, one of the great private enterprises of the Victorian age, launched some of the most famous warships of the time from its slipways at the mouth of the River Lea. A pioneer of shipbuilding in iron, the yard's expertise was also deployed in ground-breaking civil engineering projects using iron structures. Several important components of the yard were investigated at a Crossrail site, including workshops, a furnace, a mast house and mould loft building, and a slipway. An account of the history of the company places it in the wider context of London's 19th-century shipbuilding industry.

Judge's comment: Highly accessible presentation, showing how industrial archaeology can be brought to a wider audience without loss of scholarship. Strong historical background makes it relevant to those working on the development of London, but also for readers elsewhere (dock/shipping development, suburban development, 19th c social history etc).

'A Hamlet in Hendon' published by Hendon and District Archaeological Society, 2014

This is the publication of an excavation carried out by HADAS in 1973/74, which has now been reassessed by the HADAS Finds Group under the tutelage of Jacqui Pearce of MOLA. The publication represents a number of years of hard work re-evaluating the old unpublished excavation and had already been favourably reviewed by LAMAS.

Judge's comment: This is an important book for Hendon and has obviously been the work of many years for the members of the society. It is a great achievement and covers a lot of material that will be of use and interest for years to come.

★The remaining four shortlisted publications (in no particular order):

'The medieval potters of Cheam' by Clive Orton, Carshalton and District History Society occasional publication No. 5, 2015

This is a popular account of the archaeological and historical evidence for the medieval pottery industry in Cheam, Surrey, derived from nearly a century of excavations, as well as recent documentary research. It is aimed at a very general local readership, many of whom may have no previous knowledge of archaeology, so any technical terms are explained in 'fly-out' boxes. There are also suggestions of further reading for those who would like to go deeper into the subject.

Judge's comment: A good example of how a small, popular, local book should be produced. A well-organised and structured volume.

'London's Industrial Archaeology No. 13', ed Prof Martin Adams, GLIAS, 2015

This volume contains articles by members and professionals involved in archaeology on development sites, using London's Industrial Archaeology (LIA) as a means to publish these reports which would not otherwise be in the public domain. LIA allows members and others to publish their research into aspects of London's Industrial Archaeology including the Stratford Railway Workshops, a Medieval Tide Mill and developments in fermentation processes and structures at Deptford Dockyard. This issue is available on the Society's website.

NB As this volume was too large to submit as a whole, GLIAS agreed that only one of the papers from it be proposed. This was:

The Stratford Railway Workshops, From the Eastern Counties Railway to the Chobham Farm Container Depot by Irene Grosso and Guy Thompson

This presents the results from a PCA site at Angel Lane in Stratford that recorded a complex of railway workshops first developed in the 1840s.

Judge's comment Achieves the aim of explaining the excavations of a complex industrial site and linking the site to its historical context. Commendable to have a thorough report of the site published. Plans, photographs and text are well-integrated.

'Imperial College Sports Ground and RMC Land Harlington, The development of prehistoric and later communities in the Colne Valley and on the Heathrow Terraces', Wessex Archaeology, 2015

Andrew B. Powell, Alistair J. Barclay, Lorraine Mepham and Chris J. Stevens

This project brought together the multi-period results from two large-scale excavations, arranging them thematically by period to gain a wider landscape approach to be taken in the reconstruction of past activities. It also provided an opportunity to understand the dynamics of larger-scale patterns of settlement development, shift and reorganisation. A Bayesian approach to radiocarbon dating enabled more precise site chronologies for the nationally important Neolithic burials, the Bronze Age field system and the Saxon settlement to be established.

Judge's comment: Well-produced account of a range of excavations in West London conducted over a long period. Some amazing material (eg Bronze Age log ladder) which deserves to be widely known. It's pleasing to see a thorough publication of material from the London 'hinterland'.

The church at Waltham: An Archaeological and Historical Review', Waltham Abbey Historical Society, 2015

This book was written by Peter Huggins, who is credited with the great majority of the discoveries made at the site of the Abbey of Waltham, as a comprehensive edition which updates findings from twenty years ago, augmented with new discoveries. It serves as an essential guide to the parish church, abbey, and monastic estate, which straddles the line of the M25.

Judge's comment: Waltham is one of the most interesting churches of medieval England. There has the makings of a fabulous book hiding away in the information.

It is with enormous regret that we pass on the very sad news that Peter Huggins passed away in November. He was a leading amateur local historian and archaeologist in Waltham Abbey for over 50 years, working right up until very recently, when, at the age of 89, he was still directing surveys in parts of the Abbey grounds.

Peter was initially employed as a railway worker, then in the aircraft industry, and his career in archaeology began as a spare-time interest in the early '60s. He remained an amateur, but was highly regarded by many leading academics in his field, and had many reports published in academic journals.

It is people like Peter Huggins that inspire anyone with an interest in archaeology, and the LAF meeting at which the London Archaeological Prize was presented was dedicated to his memory.