

Mosaic

SURVEY OF BROMLEY AND BEXLEY

THE WEST Kent Archaeological Group, working on behalf of the DoE and in conjunction with the Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit, completed an implications study of the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley. All known sites and chance finds were categorised and plotted on to a large-scale of the area. Overlays of the major development threats were superimposed over this to highlight the critical areas.

One area in Crayford was shown to be under immediate threat and a small scale rescue excavation was undertaken. This produced evidence of prehistoric occupation on the site, which was situated close to St. Paulinus Church.

These surveys can only deal with threats to known sites and so it is hoped to develop a patrolling system, such as is already in operation in Kent, whereby development sites are watched for the much greater number of unknown sites.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

A ONE-DAY conference on "Photography in British Archaeology" was held at the Institute of Archaeology on 19 April, a joint venture of the C.B.A. and the Royal Photographic Society's Archaeology Group. It was hoped to emphasise the need for better photographic recording of sites and finds.

Peter Drewitt and David Neal of the DoE spoke on preparing sites for photography, Peter Addyman of the York Archaeological Trust on the methods evolved to cope with York's problems, Philip Rahtz, Chairman of *Rescue* on the usefulness of Polaroid cameras for an instant, continuous record on sites. Peter Dorrell of the Institute of Archaeology talked on the setting up of finds in the studio, including how he coats flint artifacts with white poster paint so that their shapes stand out, and David Leigh of University College, Cardiff, on photography and the microscope.

Now that so many full-time archaeological 'teams' and 'units' are being set up, perhaps including a specialist photographer, this conference which was chaired by Henry Cleere, was held at an opportune time to stress the importance of this form of recording.

WHODUGIT?

THE NUMBER of archaeological novels is few enough and when the author of one is a local real live dirt archaeologist, it is perhaps worth recording the event; *Strange Mansion* (a detective story — Milton House Books £2.30) is written by Tony Rook who is best known for his excavations in the Welwyn area and, in particular for his Roman Villa at Lockleys, now lying snugly in a cave under a motorway (see Diary).

Readers who perchance have seen the economical Mr. Rook tracing plans from site reports at the Institute of Archaeology, will be relieved to know that the book is not in the form of a long roll of paper punctuated by a row of slots at every four inches!

A review by Alec Scott is printed below without much comment—the Editor is, of course unbiased in this matter

"Highly respected pillar of the Establishment, military-type dig director, found trouserless and dead down a well on a Min. of Works show Roman Villa. Weighted down with lots of small change, shrimping net to hand. Biz-arré, very. The Broadshire Archaeological, Antiquarian

and Architectural Society is very nearly shocked into consciousness, and the police wisely enlist the aid of a local down-to-earth digger.

"I must say that I guessed whodunnit fairly early on; but I defy you to fathom how or why until our author chooses to disclose. A jolly good read, and despite the poor old Major's sticky fate, some good laughs. Mr. Rook has a great flair for character, and the book abounds in archaeological sub-species known to us all, as well as in sundry closely observed examples of the Great British public. He also has a meticulous eye for the way things do happen; I enjoyed particularly the account of the events leading to the reconstruction, re-stocking and re-staffing of the Broadchester Museum, and the description of the havoc wrought by the ham-handed projectionist at the lecture meeting."

ENVIRONMENTALISTS FOR LONDON

A TEAM of three graduates has recently been appointed to work on environmental aspects of archaeology in London. Their names and main fields of study are:—

Alison Gebbels — Animal bones.

Penny Spencer — Mollusca.

George Willcox — Macroscopic plant remains.

Two of the team have responsibility for general environmental work at excavations in a particular part of London (Penny Spencer in Southwark, George Willcox in the City) where they advise archaeologists and carry out or supervise the collection of samples suitable for further study. However, all three are expected to work together as a team on sites anywhere in London, should the need arise, and individually to apply their particular specialisms to material selected for detailed examination.

In order to maximise the efficiency of the team, the Ancient Monuments Laboratory (DoE) has made available the facilities of the Environmental Studies section and the advice of its experienced staff. The head of this section (Dr. Helen Keeley) has agreed to co-ordinate the work of the team.

Local societies and groups in London who require advice on aspects of environmental archaeology, should contact Dr. Keeley at the Ancient Monuments Laboratory, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London, W1X 1AB.

TESSERAE

Greater London Area Archaeological Advisory Committee — the DoE has announced that Prof. David M. Wilson has been appointed its first chairman. As with the other twelve areas, the Committee will advise the Department on policies and priorities for surveys and excavations, on applications for grants and on back-up facilities.

An increase in subscription rate — because of inflation (postage has doubled in the past year) has been announced by *Current Archaeology*; its six issues a year will now cost £2.50.

Did you know? — that all (good) excavators should suffer from a complaint whose symptoms are pins and needles in their fingers. It comes from the unusual exertion on pressure points when leaning forward on one hand while trowelling and is a complaint shared by charladies (and the editor).