

Mosaic

MONEY FOR ENFIELD EXCAVATION

THE LONDON BOROUGH of Enfield has recently published the final plans and model of the shopping precinct which is to be built in the area of Palace Gardens, Enfield. This area is an important one for the archaeological understanding of the growth of Enfield, and some work has already been done by the Enfield Archaeological Society (see *L.A.* Vol. 3, No. 6, 143-8). Fortunately, negotiations by the Society have resulted in donations totalling £5,000: £3,000 from the Norwich Union Insurance Company and £2,000 from the London Borough of Enfield. This has enabled a full-time professional excavation to be mounted: it is expected to last for about five months and will be directed by Mr. Geoff Williams. However, since the money is expected to pay for only three full-time archaeologists, considerable help from the Society will still be needed if the excavation is to achieve its objectives.

INNER LONDON UNIT SERVICES

THE INSECURELY FUNDED Inner London Archaeological Unit which currently operates in Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Tower Hamlets and Westminster held a member level meeting at Camden Town Hall on Monday, 11 December. The meeting was held because the uncertainty of continued funding meant that the survival of the Unit was in jeopardy.

At the meeting all the local authorities apart from Hammersmith stated their intent to continue support for the Unit.

The Unit has had financial difficulties since its creation in 1974, with only Camden, Islington and Westminster consistently paying the full annual contribution requested. The meeting agreed that these contributions should be on an equal basis and that those boroughs not paying the full amount should urge their committees to increase the grant.

More sites are redeveloped in Inner London than any other similarly sized area in the country and in the process important information about the history of London is destroyed. If the Unit is not adequately funded it will be unable to do the necessary archaeological work to record this information before it is lost forever.

Recent work by the Unit includes excavations at Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament; on the Roman defences of London at Tower Hill; a previously unknown Roman settlement at Shadwell and a medieval manor house in Hackney.

MEMORIAL FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY of State for the Environment, Baroness Birk has agreed to an unusual improvement at the site of one of the most famous ancient monuments in the home counties, the Roman Villa at Lullingstone in Kent. It will be a memorial to its original custodians, Mr and Mrs Rook.

A whole generation of children from schools in the home counties, as well as visitors of all ages from almost the entire world will remember the Rooks, who welcomed them to the villa, gave almost continual guided tours (now sadly missed) and answered questions on all aspects of Roman archaeology.

They were not trained as archaeologists; they joined the team excavating the site when it was discovered in 1949, and soon showed an aptitude and understanding which was quite outstanding. "Rookie", Mr Rook, quickly proved the

value of his artistic talents in recording finds, and in building explanatory models. When the Ministry of Works took the site over, he assumed charge of all the conservation and reconstruction work. Very many archaeologists recall with nostalgia the overcrowded museum hut, which has now been replaced by a bare shelter over the site. Mrs Rook was appointed his official assistant, and they worked together on the site during the day, and making models and reconstructions in the kitchen at night. Rookie's patient and painstaking tours of the site were well-known; Mr and Mrs Rook were made honorary members of the Moscow State Circus in 1958 after one marathon session, and were almost as pleased at this honour as if they had received a knighthood!

Their work will live on in the illustrations to the official guidebook to the site (which are signed simply "Rook" since they were produced by a consortium of R. J. with his two sons, one of whom is now an archaeologist in Hertfordshire, and the other of whom is Head of Design for Canadian National Museum). Most of all they will survive in the enthusiasm they invoked in many hundreds of thousands of visitors who visited the site prior to their retirement in 1967. They settled in Hertfordshire, and each was an active member of the Welwyn Archaeological Society until death intervened. At their request, their ashes were scattered on the hillside behind the Roman Villa.

The memorial which has been agreed upon will form part of the landscaping of the site which has become desirable since Dutch Elm disease killed the trees in the Darenth Valley, in which the Lullingstone Villa is situated. A walnut tree will be planted—it was one of their favourites—a seat will be erected with a commemorative plate, and a picnic area will be laid out for the school parties that they valued so much.

Many friends have expressed a wish to contribute something to the memory of the Rooks, and a fund has been started for this purpose. Contributions, made payable to "Lullingstone Memorial Fund" should be sent to 23 Mill Lane, Welwyn, Herts AL6 9EU. They will be acknowledged.

Further information can be obtained from the above address, or by telephoning Tony Rook on Welwyn (043 871) 5300.

BILL COMES AT LAST

THE LONG-AWAITED Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Bill was introduced into the House of Lords on 18 January. The proposals in the Bill follow very closely those in the document "Proposals to amend the law relating to ancient monuments" (see *L.A.* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1977) 30). One welcome change is the increase in the time allowed for excavation in "archaeological areas" from 4 to 6 months, although the recent Watling Court excavation (p.261) shows that this is still too short. While we wish this Bill all speed and good fortune, its chances of becoming law before the next Election appear slim. And when will our next chance come?

TESSERA E

Award for Gas: The Times Archaeological Award for 1978 (see *L.A.* Vol. 3, No. 5, 140) has been won by British Gas, for their archaeological work on the projected line of the 42in. Bishop Auckland to Towton pipeline project.

Surrey Unit taken over: On 1st February the Archaeological Unit of the Surrey Archaeological Society was taken over by the County Council. Their new address for the time being is at the Planning Department, County Hall, Kingston, Surrey.