

'STOP' STARTS

THE COUNCIL for British Archaeology, in collaboration with the Museums Association, RESCUE and several other bodies launched the 'STOP' (Stop Taking Our Past) Campaign on 12th March. A leaflet explaining the threat posed by the indiscriminate use of metal detectors, the legal position vis-a-vis treasure hunting, and the purpose of archaeology, has been produced and given wide circulation. The tactics seem a little puzzling—the reader is presented with a clear and (perhaps) compelling case, but is not told what to do about it (write to his M.P.? local council?), which could lead to a feeling of frustration. But perhaps the leaflet is mainly intended as a resource for archaeologists as they fight their own lonely battles up and down the country.

An attempted pre-emptive strike appeared a few weeks earlier, in the form of a press release issued by DIG (the Detector Information Group). This extraordinary document, which even describes *Current Archaeology* as the C.B.A.'s magazine (so much for their so-called Research Director) outlines a campaign to remove the C.B.A.'s charitable status for "political activity." DIG say they want the C.B.A. to "revert back to the role of looking after our heritage," which is of course precisely what it is doing.

Support for STOP has come from a number of bodies outside the archaeological fraternity—the Association of County and District Councils, the National Trust and the National Farmers' Union. The magazine *Country Life* came out in favour of the Campaign in an editorial (20th March 1980) in which it said "The truth is surely that what is at stake is the common heritage and not personal liberties."

THE ORDER OF ST. JOHN

CLERKENWELL, only a few minutes walk from the City, is a strangely neglected part of historic London, and one of the least known historic buildings of London can be found here—the remains of the Priory of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, in St. John's Square.

The Priory of Clerkenwell, the headquarters of the Order in England, was founded about 1140 on land given by a Norman knight, Jordan de Briset, for building the Hospitallers' Priory and a Benedictine Nunnery close by (see *L.A.* Vol. 2, No. 9 (1974), 217-20). The Priory's first buildings were burnt in 1381 during the Peasants' Revolt, but the twelfth century crypt survives beneath the rebuilt late medieval church.

The property was confiscated in 1539-40 by Henry VII, and the Order was suppressed. Many of the buildings were demolished, but the crypt survived as a wine-cellars and the main gatehouse (built in 1504) later served as the office of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, as well as housing the Old Jerusalem Tavern and the Parish watch-house.

In 1874 the Gate came into the possession of the revived Protestant Order of St. John, and in 1877 the St. John Ambulance service was launched. The Priory Church, which had served as a parish church, also came into the possession of the Order, in 1931. Gutted by bombs in 1941, it was restored and is now used for Order ceremonies and services.

The church, crypt and gatehouse can be visited: the gatehouse is home to the Museum of the Order, which has recently been entirely reorganised. Opening hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and there are conducted tours at 11 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. on these days. Since space is limited, large parties are advised to make prior arrangements with the Curator. The address is: Museum of the Order of St. John, St. John's Gate, St. John's Lane, Clerkenwell, London, EC1M 4DA (01-253 6644).

HERALDS' MUSEUM OPENS

A WELCOME ADDITION to London's galaxy of museums is the new Heralds' Museum at the Tower of London, which was opened by the Duke of Kent on 26th March. The idea of such a museum had been put forward in 1956, when a Trust was set up, but progress was slow until 1977, when the Department of the Environment made a room available in the old Waterloo Barracks building, just north of the White Tower.

The Museum traces the development of heraldry from Norman times until the present day. Exhibits include seals, showing the beginning of heraldry, Rolls of Arms, tabards (still worn by heralds today), some 70 shields painted with the arms of former Heralds, crests and crowns, and silver and gold items showing various coats of arms. The Rolls of Arms were first made by Heralds to be used as working drawings. The Heralds organised tournaments and the rolls show the arms of those who took part. The Rolls sometimes show figures of knights or lords in procession, on foot or mounted, and sometimes simply their shields and banners.

The Museum will be open from 1st April until 30th September every year, and the opening times will be 9.30 a.m.-5 p.m. on weekdays and 2-5 p.m. on Sundays. Entrance is free, since the price is included in the cost of entrance to the Tower of London. There is a shop in the Museum, which will sell articles of special heraldic interest.

TESSERAE

Booze at the Muse? A new licensed restaurant has been opened at the British Museum. It is intended to supplement and not supplant the existing Coffee Shop, and both will be open to the public 10.30 a.m.-4.15 p.m. Monday to Saturday and 2.30-5.15 p.m. on Sundays (my handout says 2.30 a.m., but I don't advise you to try!).

Poster Bank. Lloyds Bank have produced a very attractive archaeological poster, showing a hanging bowl found on an excavation in Lincoln, which was partly sponsored by the Bank. Copies can be obtained from Susan Exley (Assistant Press Officer), Public Relations Department, Lloyds Bank, 71 Lombard Street, London, EC3P 3BS (01-626 1500).

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