

Young LAMAS

YOUNG LAMAS is the Youth Section of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, for anyone aged between 9 and 16 with an interest in archaeology and local history. The activities organised by Young LAMAS include visits to archaeological sites, interesting towns, old castles and fascinating houses, as well as talks and practical work at the Museum of London. Meetings are held on Saturdays, 3 or 4 times a year, and in August there is a three-day *Summer Special* with all kinds of activities. Members also receive three newsletters a year.

Membership until the age of 16 is covered by a single payment, which depends on age at joining. New members receive a Young LAMAS pencil and badge; if over 14 they will also receive the Senior LAMAS newsletter and be able to attend meetings. For more details contact Elizabeth Hess, Museum of London, London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN, tel. (01) 600 3699 ext. 231.

Fortress

THIS IS A new quarterly magazine, devoted to the study of castles and fortifications, the first issue of which appears in May 1989. It will be international in scope, covering the design, construction and history of fortifications of all periods, as well as their wider implications such as strategy, tactics, weapons and equipment. Each issue will contain about five main articles, plus short notes, news of events and conferences and book reviews, on 64 large-format pages. The editor is Andrew Saunders, and the magazine will be available on subscription from Beaufort Publishing Ltd., PO Box 22, Liphook, Hampshire GU30 7PJ. The annual subscription is £18; potential readers may order a free inspection copy and either return it or subscribe within 30 days.

Development at Kings Cross

WITH THE furore over the Channel Tunnel rail route through Kent and south-east London, the issue of the siting of its London terminus has been over-shadowed. The site chosen at the former Kings Cross Goods Yard covers more than 48ha (120 acres), includes 14 listed buildings and is partially covered by two Conservation Areas. Because of the importance of this relatively unknown area, *English Heritage* commissioned two researchers from the Ironbridge Institute to survey the buildings, artefacts and fixtures in the Goods Yard and the area south of it, and published an article on the site in *Conservation Bulletin* no. 7 (February 1989).

The master plan respects the most important buildings in the Goods Yard – the Granary (a fine warehouse of 1851-2), the two coal drops and the goods offices. Two basins to the Regent's Canal will be opened up again, and the well-known gasholders will survive. Buildings outside the Goods Yard are not so fortunate: a new interchange station between Kings Cross and St. Pancras would require demolition of the Great Northern Hotel, and the new line into that station threatens two more listed buildings. *English Heritage* is to petition against part of the Kings Cross Railway Bill which seeks to set aside the need for listed building, scheduled monument or conservation area consents.

Grants for historic buildings in London

ENGLISH HERITAGE has recently announced further grants for historic buildings in London. Grants of £10,000 each have been offered to Queen Adelaide's Dispensary, Tower Hamlets (for repairs to roof and dome) and Liberty Mills, Priory Park, Merton (for repairs to the waterwheel and wheelhouse). The Friends' Meeting House, Isleworth, will receive £28,200 towards roof repairs, but the lion's share (£164,000) goes to the Royal Albert Hall for restoration of the terracotta frieze and general repairs to the roof.

Merton Priory – Chapter House Museum

SAVACENTRE LTD., a joint J Sainsbury/British Home Stores company recently opened the first phase of a major project of urban renewal at Priory Park. This phase features the seventh Savacentre which is the largest hypermarket in Britain. Town planning consent was granted as a result of a public enquiry and one aspect involved the effect of the project on the archaeological remains of the Augustinian Priory of St. Mary, Merton, a scheduled ancient monument. One of the recommendations of the Inspector was that a section of the new Merton Relief Road should be raised to fly over the chapter house walls. This would allow for the creation of an on-site museum. Savacentre accepted this proposal and constructed firstly a bridge covering the entire area of the chapter house and then the enclosing walls with additional space for exhibition cases and graphic displays. The total floor area of the new structure is 6600 sq. ft. and the cost so far is in excess of £1.2m. The interior of the museum is not yet open to the public, but the chapter house can be seen through large windows opening from a passageway beneath the Relief Road. Preservation of on-site archaeological remains is not common, and Savacentre are to be commended both for their support of the museum and for the continuing excavation of the priory site.

Warning

WE RECENTLY received a sample of a glass-fibre cleaning pencil, said to be suitable for cleaning metallic specimens. Worried about the implications of archaeologists attacking their metalwork with such implements, I spoke to a conservator about them. As far as cleaning finds is concerned, the tool is suitable (provided it is used with caution, and in the 'soft' position), but it can pose a health hazard to the user. Small particles of glass fibre can break off in use and become embedded in a finger, like splinters; being made of glass they are almost invisible and very difficult to remove. Gloves seem an obvious precaution. If you are not deterred, one brand is called Gunson's Speedplate and can be purchased at car accessory shops like Halfords.

Professional Studies Programme

THE PROFESSIONAL STUDIES section of the Department of Archaeology, University of York, have announced an ambitious programme of short training courses for this year. Although some will have already taken place by the time this issue is published, those later in the year may still be of interest. They include: Archaeology in Schools (19 May), Archaeological Survey Week (3-11 June), Archaeological Tours and Tourism (17 June), Training Excavations at Castell Henllys, Sutton Hoo and Wharram Percy (July-September), Desk-top Publishing (13 October), Soils for the Archaeologist (17 October), Sites and Monuments Records (28 October), Watching Briefs (3 November) and Computer Graphics in Archaeology (16-17 November). Further information can be obtained from S Garside-Neville, Professional Studies Secretary, Dept of Archaeology, Micklegate House, Micklegate, York, YO1 1JZ, tel. (0904) 652272.

Congratulations

DR MARK REDKNAP, formerly an Assistant Curator at the Passmore Edwards Museum, has been appointed Medievalist in the Department of Archaeology and Numismatics at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.

Professor Grimes

WE REPORT with regret the death on Christmas Day of Professor W F Grimes, a pioneer in the archaeology of London and successively Director of the London Museum and the London University Institute of Archaeology. We hope to publish a full obituary in our next issue.