

New gallery at the British Museum

A NEW Islamic gallery was opened at the British Museum in June, funded by the bequest of Sir John Addis, formerly British Ambassador in Peking and a Trustee of the Museum. It will enable the Museum's collection to be united in a single display illustrating the culture of the lands of Islam from the 7th century to the present day.

Highlights of the collection include Iznik ceramics, Mughal miniatures, enamelled glass, inlaid metalwork and lustre pottery. Many objects such as architectural inscriptions and Islamic tiles will be on permanent display for the first time. There will be a special exhibition space within the gallery for the display of the Museum's collection of miniature paintings.

A date for Waltham Abbey

THIS YEAR'S awards from the Lloyds Bank Fund for Independent Archaeologists include only one to our area – from the Dating Fund to the Waltham Abbey Historical Society. A map of about 1600 showed the faint outline of an enclosure around the market place; excavations by the Society have shown it to be a substantial ditch – a major element in the development of the town. A radiocarbon date from vegetation found in the bottom of the ditch should show whether it is prehistoric, Roman or Saxon.

Two new exhibitions at the Museum of London

TWO NEW TEMPORARY exhibitions have recently opened at the Museum of London. The larger is *The Lord Mayor, the City and the River*, which explores the world of London's river as the focus for trade and City ceremonial. It is divided into six galleries – The Lord Mayor and the River, The River Ceremonials, The Eighteenth Century River Port, Dock Schemes, The New Docks, and The City River – spanning the period from 1189 to the 1930s. Several life-size reconstructions, using material from the Museum's Docklands collection, give a sense of atmosphere as well as a foretaste of the future Docklands Museum.

The second exhibition is *Pewter 1200-1700* in the Treasury. It presents a wide range of pieces of this metalware, over half of which have never before been seen in public. Vessels displayed range from tiny toys, a feeding bottle and spoons to large plates, flagons and candlesticks. There are also three recreated interiors – a pewterer's workshop, a retail shop complete with brand new pewter vessels, and a dining room with pewterware displayed on the table. A fully-illustrated catalogue (price £4.95) accompanies the exhibition.

Brian Hobley retires

BRIAN HOBLEY, Chief Urban Archaeologist at the Museum of London since the creation of the Department of Urban Archaeology in 1973, has recently retired. During his 15 years in office, the Department has grown from a staff of a few to over a hundred, funded mainly by developers paying for the archaeological investigations of their own sites, something almost unheard-of in 1973. Growing numbers of sites have been excavated, as our annual *Round-up* testifies, and an impressively wide range of publications has been produced. It is interesting to note that when Mr Hobbly was appointed it was expected that the 'renewal of London' would be complete in 15 years; presumably the redevelopment of post-war office blocks had not been envisaged.

The Museum of London is taking this opportunity to merge its two excavating departments, the DUA and the Department of Greater

London Archaeology, into a Field Archaeology Division, under a single head. It is expected that this post will be advertised in the summer. Meanwhile, John Schofield has been appointed acting head of the DUA for six months from 1 April 1989.

Archaeology at the Open University

THE OPEN University, in collaboration with the Oxford University Department for External Studies, have announced two new courses from January 1990. A new course in Local History will be launched, offering two one-year modules, and two modules of the Advanced Certificate in British Archaeology will also be offered. The topics offered are *English Local History to c 1550*, *English Local History from c 1550*, *Early Medieval Archaeology*, *Later Prehistoric Archaeology*, and they will be based at Oxford, Reading or Amersham. Students successfully completing two modules in either course will be awarded an Oxford Advanced Certificate in Local History or British Archaeology. Students can also receive a full Open University credit at second level for each module successfully completed up to a maximum of two.

The fee for each module (including the cost of shared accommodation for the residential field week) will not be more than £340. Further information can be obtained from The Archaeology/Local History Administrator, OUDES, Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA.

Mobile Museum for schools

THE MUSEUM *on the move* is a mobile exhibition service for primary schools in the docklands area which provides a practical introduction to the story of 'Working Lives in the Docks'. Using oral history interviews, photos and tools and equipment from the Museum in Docklands collection the exhibition offers a mixture of 'hands on' and drama exercises to give an insight into the work of the docker and diver and the infamous 'call-on' system. For further information contact the Education Department at the Museum of London.

Good news for the numerate

OUR COMPLAINT about the price of Stephen Shennan's book *Quantifying Archaeology* (see LA 6, no. 1, 23) has been answered. Edinburgh University Press have announced a paperback edition at the modest price of £8.95 (compared with the hardback price of £35). While we cannot claim the credit, we are glad to see it.

Goodbye and best wishes

IN THIS issue we say goodbye to Beth Richardson, who was an Assistant Editor of *the London Archaeologist* for several years and organised the annual *Excavation Round-up* for even longer. She is leaving the Finds Section of the DUA for a post as an Assistant Curator at Canterbury Museum. She goes with the best wishes of the magazine's officers, committee and we are sure the readers too.

Change of address

THE ARCHAEOLOGY Branch of the Greater London Sites and Monuments Record has moved to 38-40 Glasshill Street, London SE1, tel. (01) 928 0784. The Finds Section of the Department of Greater London Archaeology has moved to the same address, tel. (01) 928 0778/9.

A new museum

THE DESIGN Museum opened on 6 July at Butlers Wharf, Shad Thames, London SE1 2YD, tel. (01) 403 6933.