

Guides to London's Museums

THE LONDON Museums Service has recently published three leaflets in its new series *What to see in London's local museums*. Each leaflet in the series will cover a specific theme, museum subject or geographical area. The first is *What's on in and around Docklands*, listing museums and heritage attractions in and around London Docklands. Among the nineteen locations listed are such favourites as Tower Bridge and the National Maritime Museum, but also lesser-known buildings such as Brunel's Engine House (re-opened on 25 March), Lavender Pond Pumphouse and the Ragged School Museum.

Further details can be obtained from Vanessa Trevelyan, London Museums Service (071-600 0219) or Helen Watters (LDDC Tourism Development Executive (071-515 3000)).

The second leaflet is *London's Historic Country Houses*, listing sixteen country houses which have taken on a new role as local museums. The third, *What to see in the Performing Arts*, lists seventeen museums and archives connected with music and the theatre. Further leaflets are planned on *Sports and Pastimes*, *Where to eat in London's Museums*, *Unusual Museums in central London* and *Museums in west London*.

London on disc

AN INTERACTIVE video disc, the *City Disc*, has been produced by the BBC Interactive Television Unit in association with Citicorp/Citibank and the Corporation of London, and involving the Museum of London, Bank of England, Citisights, the Guildhall Library and others. It allows the user to explore interactively a huge amount of films, maps, text and sounds of the City of London, including several Citisights walks and many reconstructions of the City. The only snag is the price – £1495 (or £395 for educational users) for the disc, plus £2000 to £5000 for the equipment. Something for the forward-looking public library, perhaps (some already have the BBC Domesday disc).

A new look at Kenwood House

THE FIRST new guide book to The Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood, Hampstead since 1953 has recently been published by English Heritage. Kenwood's reputation for its collection of paintings has overshadowed its architectural history. It is in fact one of the major works of Robert Adam, who remodelled the house in 1764-79. In this book Julius Bryant examines Adam's involvement at Kenwood, throwing new light on his work and on his role as an innovator. He has also been able to reconstruct, for the first time, how the house was furnished and how the rooms were used at different stages in Kenwood's history. The book has been produced by English Heritage for the London Historic Houses Trust, with sponsorship from Savills Plc. It is priced at £2.95 (84 pp., 109 illus., 78 in colour).

Cuming Museum re-opens

AFTER A PERIOD of extensive building and maintenance work, the Cuming Museum re-opened to the public on 10 May. It shows the history of Southwark from the Roman settlement to the present day. The display includes medieval life, Shakespeare's Bankside theatres and the Southwark of Charles Dickens. Objects on display range from pilgrim badges and chain mail to shop signs and milk carts, and from parts of a Roman boat and statues of gods, to Victorian toys and the Marshalsea prison pump.

Schools and other groups are welcome throughout the week. To make and appointment ring the Keeper, Caroline Ellis, on 071 701 1342. The Museum's address is 155-157 Walworth Road, SE17 1RS, and the new opening hours are Tuesdays to Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Passmore Edwards Museum to re-open

READERS may have been aware that the Passmore Edwards

Museum in Romford Road, Stratford has been closed for refurbishment, and is due to re-open in the autumn. What they may not have realised – and what we did not realise until we read the latest *AMSSEE News* (May 1990) – is that the re-opening was almost prevented by a freeze on spending by Newham Council, after the old displays had been stripped out. Now, however, Newham Council have allocated £73,000 towards the costs of refurbishment. Since the original estimate of the total cost was £100,000, much remains to be found, but it looks as though the Museum will indeed re-open in the autumn as planned. Admission will continue to be free.

New Gallery at the Museum of London

THE SECOND World War Gallery at the Museum of London is being completely renovated, with a new audio-visual presentation and a unique collection of memorabilia. There will be a new Blitz display, as well as showcase displays on 'Everyday Life in Wartime London' and 'Women at War'.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the London Blitz, there will also be a temporary photographic exhibition *Images of the London Blitz: myth and reality*, from 4 September to 6 May 1991. It will show many photographs never shown or published before, as well as more familiar images, including works of Bill Brandt, Bert Hardy and George Rodger.

Five churches at Waltham Abbey

A POSITION has been reached at Waltham where there are no more questions of a major structural sort which the available ground can reasonably be expected to answer. There are questions of detail, of course, which are in doubt, and there are points of interpretation which may change as experience broadens and as other parallels become available. This point has been reached, not by total excavation, but by the use of small trenches to answer specific questions. Two churches have been known at Waltham for some years, but the increase in this number to five has depended on a great deal of good fortune in finding evidence of the pre-conquest churches when underfloor central heating was installed in the present church in 1986.

As presently understood, and before the ultimate discipline of writing the final report, the sequence is as follows:

Church 1 A simple ground-standing timber building, of which part of the north wall sill foundation trench has been seen. A burial outside the SW corner was dated to 590-690 AD, or, if it followed the conversion by Cedd, to 653-690.

Churches 2-5 These are referred to as 'stone churches one to four' in *Mosaic* Vol. 6 no. 5 (1989) 140.

Some important general principles can be illustrated from the sequence. One is that foundations were re-used time and time again in successive builds; the outside walls of Church 2 influenced the width of Churches 3 and 4 so that the relatively small width today depends on the original mortared rubble foundations. Secondly, since church building takes a long time, it is necessary to keep part of a church in use while the successor is being built around it. This is illustrated in at least three instances: the timber church was entirely inside the centre of Church 2 and could have remained in use; the chancel of Church 2 was entirely inside the re-formed end of Church 3; the central nave walls of Church 5 were built just outside the walls of Church 4, and the chancel pillars of the latter were retained so that the end of Church 4 could have remained in use until some part of the new extensions were ready, when the end wall could be broken down to connect the two builds.

The work illustrates that, even when working in a heavily used, and prosperous, 19th-century graveyard, there is always somewhere between tombs where a thin and agile worker can operate.

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