

Mosaic

Royal Commission move completed

BY THE TIME this issue is published, the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England will have completed its relocation from central London to Swindon. Its new head office will be known as the National Monuments Record Centre (NMRC) and will be housed in the former Great Western Railway General Office: the postal address is: RCHME, National Monuments Record Centre, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ, tel. 0793 414700 (RCHME switchboard), 0793 414600 (NMR enquiries), fax 0793 414707 (RCHME), 0793 414606 (NMR). Tours of the NMRC, for individuals and groups, will be available from 4 July; they can be booked through the Commission's Information Officer, Jon Cannon, on 0793 414617.

This move brings the complete National Monuments Record – archaeology, buildings, air photographs and maritime sites – under one roof for the first time. The public search room in the nmrc will provide integrated access to: data on over 150,000 archaeological sites, three million historic buildings records and photographs, complete coverage of England in air photographs, and authoritative data on scheduled monuments and listed buildings. There is access for the disabled throughout the building, and free on-site parking.

As a service to London-based users the Commission will maintain an office in central London, where material relating to Greater London can be consulted. There will also be direct access to the NMRC in Swindon by computer, fax and telephone. Until new premises are found the London public search room will remain in Fortress House; the contact there is Sarah Brown, tel. 071 973 3091 or fax 071 494 3998.

Local museum on the line

WITH ALL THE fuss about the future of the Museum of London Archaeological Service and the Passmore Edwards Museum, the fate of some of our local museums may have been overlooked. One such museum is the Bourne Hall Museum in Ewell, just over the border in Surrey. Threatened by closure as an economy measure a few years ago, it was saved by a demonstration of local support and the setting-up of SEEMS (Support for Epsom and Ewell Museum Services). The museum now has a three-year programme, approved by the local Council, to improve its visibility and the service it offers to the local

in the alluvium, either silt/clays or peats, like the trackways of east London, the neolithic foreshore at Courages, Southwark, the Bronze age occupation at Runnymede or many of the sites in the Essex estuaries. What sort of floodplain was available for exploitation by the people at each of these sites?

An interpretation of the mechanisms by which these silt/clay sediments formed is therefore very important and we should perhaps move our attention from the exclusivity of the organic horizons, trackways notwithstanding, to a broader approach of the whole alluvial sequence.

All these sites are invisible to us without further work, and it is clear that, if nothing else, the

population. As well as obvious points, like improved signposting and a museum shop, there is a programme of travelling displays and increased contacts with local schools.

A collection of collections

THE LATEST exhibition at the Museum of London, *Carry on Collecting!* (see Diary) seeks to involve the public by displaying a total of 48 Londoners' collection: everything on display has been lent by the public. There are collections of cameras, keyrings, combs, through to police memorabilia and pulp novels, all showing a passion for collecting. There is an associated programme of talks, children's workshops and swapmeets. The exhibition is part of the *People's Show Festival 1994*, a nationwide event co-ordinated by Walsall Museum and Art Gallery.

Fashion in London's museums

THE LONDON Museums Service has just produced another leaflet in its series on London museums. *London's Museums on the Catwalk* describes a range of museums in London which contain collections of costumes. They range from Kensington Palace's Royal Ceremonial Dress collection to the Brent People gallery at the Grange Museum of Community History, where visitors get the chance to try on clothes. The leaflet is available free from tourist information centres, libraries, museums and arts venues throughout London.

Gallery changes at the Museum of London

STILL ON THE topic of fashion, a new display of 18th century costume and textile has opened at the Museum of London. Called *Calico Crazy*, it illustrates the London calico printing industry. A tableau of six figures are dressed in colourful printed fabrics from England and France, and exotic painted cottons from India. The display is enhanced by a table set for tea with 18th-century cups, saucers and silverware. An illustration of a calico printer's workshop, with fabrics being block-printed and pencilled, shows how men, women and children were employed in the production of dress and furnishing fabrics. Chinoiserie-style wall paper panels and a length of furnishing fabric, all printed in London in the 18th century, are displayed to highlight the links in design and technology between the wallpaper and calico printing industries.

The Prehistoric gallery has closed for redevelopment and will re-open in December.

borehole data need to be collated and mapped if a reasonable archaeological approach to this area is to be developed. In these days when archaeologists must work within a predictive framework to ensure that sites are picked up through evaluation an appreciation of the prehistoric landscape would be an important tool for recognising the potential of areas for archaeological evidence. At some time in the future it seems inevitable that a settlement site will be found buried beneath 2-3m (6-10ft) of alluvium and lying either on a buried ground surface of sands and gravels lying just above the contemporary floodplain, on a humified peat or wood peat, or in the clays themselves, let alone further trackways and riverside structures.