

## Greenwich prepares for the 21st century

IN ALL THE hype over the Millennium Dome, other developments in Greenwich, even more exciting from an historical point of view, have tended to be overlooked. Plans for the long-term future of the historic buildings that once formed the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, were announced in July. The site has been leased for 150 years to the newly-formed Greenwich Foundation. The University of Greenwich will occupy the Queen Anne, Queen Mary and King William buildings, while the Trinity College of Music will move into the King Charles building from its present site in Marylebone. These moves will start in 1999 and should be complete by the end of 2001. A new library will be housed in the former Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital, once it is restored, and student accommodation will be provided in the former Devonport Nurses' Home, which is also being refurbished.

The Foundation will keep under its direct control the Painted Hall, the Chapel, the Undercroft and the Pepys Building, and will be responsible for the maintenance of the external fabric of the buildings. Visitors will be catered for by a new Visitor Centre, which will interpret and present Historic Greenwich to the public, and act as a gateway to the World Heritage Site. It is intended that improved public access will include the crypt, the only remaining part of the original Tudor Palace.

The substantial costs of conversion are being met by capital funding from the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (£17m) and from the Heritage Lottery Fund (£10m), as well as maintenance costs of £1.5m per year for seven years from the Department. It is hoped to create a reserve fund to support maintenance over the long term.

## Heritage Lottery Funding for London

THE ALLOCATION of £10m of HLF money to the Greenwich Foundation (see above) led me to wonder what other historic buildings in London were benefiting from this source. There have in fact been several other large grants, for example:

National Maritime Museum's Neptune Court Project - £12m; Imperial War Museum - £12.6m; Royal Artillery Museum, phase 1 - £5m; Crystal Palace - £2.1m; Well Hall Pleasance, Eltham - £1.5m; All Saints' Cemetery, Nunhead - £1.25m; Eltham Palace - £1m.

A pattern seems to be emerging of a relatively small grant (e.g. £10,000 to £20,000) being awarded for the design phase of a project, followed by a much more substantial grant for those projects that successfully cross this hurdle. Whatever one may think of the National Lottery, it is clear that it has rapidly become a major new source of funding for heritage projects.

and historical data to produce a cohesive volume showing the variability of the populations' responses to what has often been seen as the uniformly catastrophic arrival of epidemic disease.

'Variability' of adaptation is also the emphasis of the second book. It details a shift in interpretative approach, together with the extension back in time of many social and economic features traditionally associated with agricultural populations,

## Birkbeck College Faculty of Continuing Education training excavation

BETWEEN 22 June and 24 July, Birkbeck College Faculty of Continuing Education (formerly known as the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies) ran its annual training excavation for students. For the second year running, the excavation was conducted on a site at the junction of Brockham Street and Harper Road, in the London Borough of Southwark (TQ 3234 7491). The 1998 excavation followed an evaluation conducted in 1997.

During the five weeks of the excavation over 125 students, from Birkbeck and from other universities, experienced the vagaries of an urban excavation, including the shaven-headed, jack-booted dumper-truck low-loader driver threatening a member of staff, unemptied chemical toilets and the theft of personal belongings. In addition to this, the students were taught excavation techniques, were introduced to the skills of single-context recording and attended specialist sessions run by staff from the London Borough of Southwark, the Museum of London, and the Museum of London Archaeology Service.

Despite the evaluation of 1997 providing evidence of prehistoric activity and indicating the presence of Roman field systems on the site, the excavation uncovered only limited evidence of features that, at present, can definitely be attributed to the use of the site during the Roman period, although Roman building material and coins were ubiquitous.

The most impressive recorded feature was a large ditch running north-east to south-west along the Brockham Street frontage of the site. Initial dating of that feature suggests that it was of late medieval or early post-medieval date. In addition to the ditch, evidence of extensive post-medieval activity was recorded, including a large quarry pit and brick-lined cesspits associated with houses that were built on the site in the 19th century. These cesspits produced a large assortment of domestic ceramics and environmental material, including the skull of a curlew.

Post-excavation assessment of the archaeological archive is being undertaken in a Birkbeck FOCE evening class at the Museum of London. Nineteen students are enrolled on the course, and the attendance at both the excavation and the post-excavation class emphasises the important function that the courses fulfil.

Birkbeck FOCE is indebted to numerous people and organisations for enabling the successful completion of the excavation, in particular the London Borough of Southwark, the Museum of London, the Museum of London Archaeology Service, Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee and Surrey Archaeological Society.

which has much in common with the still-developing paradigm of 'complex' hunter-gatherers of parts of northern and western Europe. But in the US, as exemplified in this publication, 'environmental' and 'social' archaeologies are seamlessly integrated (though there is still a schizophrenic attitude to the concept of adaptation itself) -- is this the real post-processual archaeology?

Sarah Mason