

Mosaic

Lottery support for London's Archaeological Archive

THE HERITAGE Lottery Fund has announced an award of £1.1m to the Museum of London's London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (see Hedley Swain 'Taking London Archaeology to Londoners' LA 9, no. 1 (1999) 3-5). Together with a bequest of £200,000, and £20,000 so far raised from archaeological organisations and individuals, this will enable the Museum's plan to be implemented. The resource centre building at Eagle Wharf Road will be enlarged to house the inflow of archaeological material from new and future excavations. There will be new public areas, and the Museum is working with local archaeological societies, universities and other educational groups to design a programme of access and events.

Other projects in our area for which Heritage Lottery Funding support has recently been announced include Painshill Park, Cobham, where £1.2m will provide a new Visitor Centre and educational facilities for this 18th-century landscape park, and the Bourne Hall Museum, Ewell, where £85,000 has been given to provide new displays, temporary exhibition space and a children's activity area, as well as to improve disabled access.

One of the earlier HLF grants came to fruition on 18 September, when Queen Anne's Court at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, was opened after a programme of repair and restoration. A grant of £1.5m enabled Greenwich University to undertake works including the restoration of the floor plans, reinstatement of lost features, essential external maintenance and refurbishment to the inner courtyard. The grand staircase of one of the riverfront pavilions can now be seen as the architects intended. The Queen Anne Court will be used as teaching space by the University and will be open to the public every weekend.

Trends in London's archaeology

THE ANNUAL REPORT of English Heritage's Greater London Archaeology Service for 1998-9 makes fascinating reading, especially for those with an eye for figures. Over 3000 out of a total of 8,000 planning applications in 1998 were followed up with an initial archaeological appraisal. Of these, about 1000 generated further work, mostly advice on how to protect archaeological remains through the most appropriate treatment.

Cases of fieldwork numbered several hundred, distributed unevenly among the Boroughs. By far the most (60) were in the City, followed by Westminster (21) and Southwark and Tower Hamlets (14 each). Cases were reported from all Boroughs, although some had only one. Nineteen organisations were responsible for this work, with MoLAS, PCA and AOC taking the lead in terms of numbers of projects.

Inquiries to the Greater London Sites and Monuments continue to rise, up 13.5% last year to over 7000. As might be expected, most were from planning applicants' archaeological contractors, but there was an encouraging minority of requests from students and researchers. This trend is likely to continue with the establishment of digital links between the GLSMR and the national Archaeology Data Service (see <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/>). The GLSMR can also be contacted on 0171 973 3779.

Another finger in the pie?

THE STANDING Conference on London Archaeology has been looking at the role of the new Mayor and Assembly for London (due to be elected in May 2000) in London's archaeology. A report in its Summer 1999 *Newsletter* explains that the

Mayor will have a duty to prepare and publish a Culture Strategy; the legislation lists 'ancient monuments and sites', buildings and other structures which are of historical or architectural interest or which otherwise form part of the heritage of Greater London', 'museums', and 'treasure and antiquities of a movable nature', among the matters which may be included in the cultural strategy. The legislation provides for the Mayor to appoint a Cultural Strategy Group for London; in anticipation of this, a group has been set up which includes English Heritage (London Region) as well as many sports, culture and heritage organisations.

A first for Southwark

A RECENT excavation in Southwark, just west of Tower Bridge, has revealed the remains of the first rowing galley to be excavated in the British Isles. It was identified as such because of the survival of several planks including the gunwale, which contained three oar-locks, and cut-outs for the benches where the oarsmen sat. The ship was clinker-built and originally dated to between 1267 and 1276, and had been re-used in the construction of a Tudor tank or fish pond. It was in one of a group of such ponds that the now famous Tudor banana skin was found. (Source: *Archaeology Matters*, no. 6 (August 1999))

An Institute of Historical Interpretation

FOLLOWING a workshop in Oxford last November, the Institute of Historical Interpretation has been set up to facilitate co-operation and mutual understanding between live interpretation groups, historians, the heritage industry, and educationalists, in order to exchange information and improve the quality of all forms of public presentation. In addition, it aims to co-ordinate a pertinent education programme for those involved with live historical interpretation, to aid the acquisition of relevant knowledge and skills, whether it be traditional farming or cottage industry skills, research methods or visitor management and health & safety. We aim to work towards the creation of an internationally recognised graded and categorised kite mark, ensuring awareness of the type of quality presentation that groups can supply. Finally the Institute is non political, non group specific and hopes to cover all historical periods interpreted.

Obviously this will all take time and will be a gradual process, but as a starting point the Institute is producing a biannual journal, published by Partizan Press. The first issue of the IHI Journal will be available in November 1999.

There will be an Inaugural Meeting at 12 noon, Saturday 13 November, at Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre, Oxford. For more information contact: IHI, c/o 1 Golden Noble Hill, Colchester, Essex CO1 2AG, email: roddau@essex.ac.uk

Victory for King Alfred

THE EXHIBITION *Alfred the Great: London's forgotten king*, at the Museum of London (see *Diary*) is well worth a visit. Although only a small exhibition, fitting into the museum's treasury, it is very well focused, and succinctly tells the story of what is known about Alfred and his involvement with London. It is illustrated not only by artefacts of the period, some very well known and some from recent excavations not previously displayed, but also by historical documents. Some re-used timbers, found on the Thames Court excavation, show the size of some of the buildings that may relate to Alfred's time. A well-illustrated booklet will provide a memento of the exhibition long after it has closed.