

Mosaic

You win some:

(1) the Sir John Soane's Museum

Plans to secure the future of the Sir John Soane's Museum have been given a boost by the award of a development grant of £196,000 by the London Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund. It will enable the museum to advance its plans for 'Opening up the Soane', a major project of restoration and improvement works. The project will enable the museum to increase public access to unseen parts of the house and allow more of the collection to be displayed and eight interventions to improve visitor access and facilities.

It is estimated that this ambitious scheme will take four years to achieve at the cost of around £6 m. The museum is appealing for financial help from 'everyone who loves Soane's strange and idiosyncratic creation and who wants it survive.'

(2) Westminster Abbey Chapter House

Having already restored the interior of the Westminster Abbey Chapter House, English Heritage announced in January that it will complete its programme of work with a £2 m restoration of the exterior. Repair and conservation of the mixed limestone and sandstone stonework will be a priority, particularly at high level where it has suffered most from pollution and weathering. The gargoyles and stained-glass windows will also be restored, and the lead roof and gutters will be repaired and made weather-tight.

The repairs to the exterior stonework will be the most extensive since the 19th century, when Gilbert Scott carried out extensive renovations: stripping out the timber to reveal the most magnificent tiled medieval floor in Britain, unblocking bricked-up windows, and removing the miles of shelves dating from the building's time as the repository of the national archives, and the home of the Domesday Book and Magna Carta. That was the last major work apart from the reconstruction after the blitz of the stained glass windows from crates of medieval and Victorian fragments. The damage to the outside walls includes shrapnel scars from the shell fragments that shattered these windows.

The works are due to be completed in 2010, and to mark the event, the Society of Antiquaries of London will publish a major monograph on all aspects of the history, art and architecture of the Chapter House.

(3) The Cutty Sark

A pioneering partnership which is helping to save the Cutty Sark has won a prize in the London Development Agency's London Knowledge Transfer Awards. Specialists from the University of Greenwich are using sophisticated computer models to determine how to dismantle and reassemble the fire-damaged ship, which will open again to the public in 2010.

Five years ago, the Cutty Sark faced a death sentence: experts predicted that the Victorian tea clipper would collapse within a decade if nothing was done. Yet the Cutty Sark Trust feared that the very act of restoration could endanger this precious icon of the nation's maritime heritage. So Chief Engineer Peter Mason called in the university to predict how the decaying wooden hull and corroded iron frame would respond to restoration.

Professor Chris Bailey and Dr Stoyan Stoyanov of Greenwich University are working with the Trust to understand how the Cutty Sark's structure will age over the next 100 years, and when maintenance will be required. They are developing technology that will be used on other ships too, protecting maritime heritage across the globe.

... and you lose some

Despite objections from local people and the heritage sector, planners have granted permission for the construction of a four-storey hotel, housing and shopping complex on the opposite bank of the Thames from Hampton Court Palace. David Starkey described the hotel as 'out of scale and out of character', and a development that threatened the 'magical riverside landscape' of the palace. 'It's one of the top four or five most important historical structures in the country', he said, and he criticised the Communities Secretary, Hazel Blears, for not using her powers to call the decision in, and

for leaving the decision to Elmbridge Borough Council. John Barnes, Conservation Director at Historic Royal Palaces, which manages Hampton Court, said the decision to allow the hotel would have been 'inconceivable' in other countries.

Hackney and Tower Hamlets Survey

Working with English Heritage and the Churches Conservation Trust, the Building Exploratory are undertaking a survey of the condition, use and significance of listed places of worship in Hackney and Tower Hamlets. The survey contributes to a wider English Heritage strategy about places of worship, and will inform the understanding of the condition of these important buildings nationwide. This is a pilot project and the Building Exploratory hope to develop a model to carry it out across London.

This survey will build upon previous investigations of places of worship carried out by the Building Exploratory in 2007 as part of the project *Religion and Place in Tower Hamlets*, which can be seen on the website www.religionandplace.org.uk.

SCOLA wound up

At its AGM on 16 March, the Standing Conference on London Archaeology passed a motion to dissolve itself and hand over the task of representing London's archaeology to the London Group of the Council for British Archaeology. We hope to include a more detailed report in the next issue.

Honours for heritage

Peter Cormack, lately Curator of the William Morris Gallery in Waltham Forest since 1977, has been made an MBE for services to arts and heritage. Peter lost his job two years ago (as did four other staff) when the local authority that manages the gallery decided to make cuts in funding and opening hours. Patricia Astley-Cooper, the Curator of the Wandsworth Museum, has also been made an MBE for services to heritage.

(we are indebted to Salon, the online newsletter of the Society of Antiquaries of London, for much of the information contained here)

Diary

April

16 (6.30 p.m.) London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. 'Friends in the City: the Quakers in 17th- and early-18th century London' by Simon Dixon. Terrace Room, Museum of London, London Wall EC2.

17 (7 p.m.) City of London Archaeological Society. 'Child health in London: 1000 years of human growth' by Daniel Antoine. City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, EC1.

20 (7.45 p.m.) West Essex Archaeological Group. 'The Archaeology of the Fens' by Tim Reynolds. Sixth Form Block, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green.

22 (7.30 p.m.) Greenwich Historical Society. 'Henry VIII and Greenwich' by Julian Bowsher. Blackheath High School, Vanbrugh Park, SE3.

29 (6 p.m.) Gresham College. 'Merchants and Heroes: London's history in the time of John Stow' by Matthew Davies. Barnard's Inn Hall, Holborn, EC1.

May

6 (8 p.m.) Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society. 'Timber framed buildings in Surrey' by Martin Higgins. St Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell.

8 (8 p.m.) Richmond Archaeological Society. 'London before London: reconstructing a Palaeolithic Landscape' by Caroline Juby. Vestry Hall, Paradise Road, Richmond.

11 (8 p.m.) West Essex Archaeological Group. 'A new history of Roman Britain from coins?' by Sam Moorhead. Sixth Form Block, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green.

12 (7.30 p.m.) Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society. 'Entertainment in South London – its history and architecture' by Brian Bloice. The Housing Co-op Hall, 106 The Cut, SE1.

12 (8 p.m.) Hendon & District Archaeological Society. 'The Guildhall Roman Amphitheatre' by Francis Grew. Avenue House, 17 East End Road, Finchley N3.

14 (6.30 p.m.) London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. 'Islington's Remembrance Project – residents and conflict in the 20th century' by John Shepherd. Terrace Room, Museum of London, London Wall EC2.

15 (7 p.m.) City of London Archaeological Society. 'The London Priory of the Hospitallers' by Pamela Willis. City Temple, Holborn Viaduct, EC1.

June

3 (8 p.m.) Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society. 'Iron Age and Roman farmstead at Purberry Shot, Ewell: recent research' by Frank Pemberton. St Mary's Church Hall, London Road, Ewell.

8 (7.45 p.m.) West Essex Archaeological Group. 'Death in Ancient Egypt' by Kathryn Hoare. Sixth Form Block, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green.

Conferences

Discoveries and Research presented by the West Kent Archaeological Groups, 2 to 5.30 p.m., Saturday 25th April, at Sevenoaks Community Centre, off Otford Road, Sevenoaks. Details on the CKA website, www.the-cka.fsnet.co.uk. Tickets £4 from CKA, 7 Sandy Ridge, Borough Green TN15 8HP (cheques payable to CKA; see please).

The Tudor Port of London: An Archaeological Investigation, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 16 May at Museum of London Docklands. An overview of the Tudor port from an archaeological perspective, looking at the topography of the harbour, its wharves and buildings, its ships and shipping, as well as the evidence for traffic and trade. There will also be presentations on the 'Gresham Ship'. Speakers include: Jens Auer, Geoff Egan, Hazel Forsyth, Damian Goodburn, Phil Magrath, Frank Meddens, Gustav Milne, Geoff Pavitt, Jacqui Pearce and Roy Stephenson. Places are limited. Admission is by ticket only, booked in advance from Gresham College (020) 7831 0575 or by email through enquiries@gresham.ac.uk.

Courses

Syon House, Brentford, training excavations by Birkbeck, in conjunction with Syon Park and Museum of London Archaeology. Each excavation lasts for one week, from 8th June, 15th June, 22nd June, 29th June and 6th July 2009. Enrolment forms can be downloaded from: http://www.bbk.ac.uk/ce/archaeology/practical_training.html

To enrol by telephone call Central Enrolments (020 7631 6651) quoting module code FFAR085H4. For more information, phone the Executive Officer on 020 7631 6627 or email: archaeology@FLL.bbk.ac.uk

Kent Archaeological Field School, weekend and week-long courses until October. Fees £70 for two-day courses. Archaeological Training Week 7–11 September. Details from Kent Archaeological Field School, School Farm Oast, Graveney Road, Faversham, Kent ME13 8UP. Tel: 01795 532548. Website: www.kafs.co.uk.

Copped Hall Trust/West Essex

Archaeological Group. Training dig 10–14 August (for beginners), Field School 17–21 August (not for beginners), at Copped Hall near Epping. Full details on both events from Mrs Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Road,

Epping, Essex CM16 5HW (tel 01992 813 725, email pmd2@ukonline.co.uk).

Events

Conservation in Action, at the Museum of London, 3 to 3.40 p.m., Monday 4 May and Wednesday 6 May. Meet one of the Museum's conservators and find out what they do behind the scenes, and why their work is so important. Admission free.

Festival of British Archaeology, 18 July to 2 August, will encompass a huge variety of activities for all across London.

Membership

Individual membership of the Council for British Archaeology, which includes six issues a year of *British Archaeology*, costs £28 p.a.; full price/renewal price £34 p.a.; joint membership with *London Archaeologist* costs £36 (new CBA members only). See <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cba/membership/pricelist> for details. Payment should be sent to C.B.A., St Mary's House, Bootham, York, YO30 7BZ (01904 671 417).

Open Days

Crofton Roman Villa, Orpington (next to Orpington station) open Wednesdays, Fridays and Bank Holiday Mondays 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and Sundays 2 to 4.30 p.m. until the end of October. Special event *Life of a Roman Soldier* on Sunday 26 July (10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.). For more information see <http://cka.moon-demon.co.uk/villa.htm>.

Practical archaeology

AOC Archaeology Group. Contact Melissa Melikian, Post-Excavation Manager (020 8843 7380).

London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre. Contact Archive Manager, Roy Stephenson (020 7566 9317).

Croydon & District. Contact Jim Davison, 8 Brentwood Road, South Croydon, CR2 0ND.

Borough of Greenwich. Contact Greenwich Heritage Centre, Building 41, Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, SE18 6SP (020 8854 2452).

Hammersmith & Fulham. Contact Keith Whitehouse, 85 Rannoch Road, W6 9SX (020 7385 3723).

Kingston. Enquiries to 020 8546 5386.

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. Contact Finds Manager, Märit Gaimster (020 7639 9091).

Surrey. Enquiries to Rob Poulton, Archaeological Unit Manager, Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking GU21 1ND (01483 594 634).