

Early Christian archaeology

The Society for Church Archaeology, the British Archaeological Association and the Society of Antiquaries of London have joined together to organise a European-wide conference on Early Christian archaeology to be held on 26–28 June 1997. Speakers should include Charles Thomas, Frances Mawer, Jeremy Knight, Ian Fisher, Jerry O'Sullivan, Kevin Blockley, Kevin Leahy, Claire Walsh, Noel Duval, Paul Arthur, Cantino Wataghin, and Gisella Ripoll.

Full details and booking forms are available from the General Secretary, Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1V 0HS.

New Cathedrals Research Unit

Last year saw the launch of a new, interdisciplinary Cathedrals Research Unit based at the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies Centre for Conservation Studies at the University of York.

Its five main areas of interest are:

- ⊗ the continuing use of the cathedral as a place of worship and the impact this has on the historic fabric
- ⊗ conservation of the fabric and archaeology of cathedrals, including sculpture, glass, paintings, books and archives
- ⊗ cathedrals as foci for pilgrimage and tourism
- ⊗ cathedrals as continuing centres of excellence in the commissioning of works of art and as centres of training in craftsmanship
- ⊗ security of buildings, their contents and staff.

Further information on the work of the Unit can be obtained from Peter Burman, Director, Centre for Conservation Studies, The Kings Manor, York, YO1 2EP, Tel 01904 433963, Fax 01904 433949.

England's Christian Heritage Year

The 1400th anniversary of the arrival in England of St Augustine, sent by Pope Gregory I from Rome to convert the English to Christianity, is behind a major English Heritage tourist and conservation programme launched in February to mark the year of *England's Christian Heritage*.

The highlight of the year will be the opening, in May, of a new museum among the ruins of St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury. The Abbey ruins form part of the Canterbury World Heritage Site along with Canterbury Cathedral and St Martin's Church. Over 100 special events are planned at 43 sites and English Heritage has produced a free souvenir map showing 200 ecclesiastical buildings of special interest throughout the country. A major new publication on St Augustine's Abbey, edited by Richard Gem, will be published in May.

For a free map of England's Christian Heritage call English Heritage Customer Services on 0171 973 3434. For further information *St Augustine's Abbey* (Product Code XE20006) contact Gerry Bartlett, Publications Publicity Officer on 0171 973 3708.

Surveying churches in deserted medieval villages

An architectural and historical study of the churches or chapels associated with deserted or shrunken rural settlements on the edges of the Avon valley is currently underway. During the 15th and early 16th century a number of these settlements shrank down to a single farmstead and the associated chapels were sometimes converted to farmhouses. An interim report on the 1992–95 work and a list of sites studied is forthcoming in the 1995 Medieval Settlement Research Group Annual Report. In addition, a number of site summaries (all in Hereford & Worcester) have

been published in *West Midlands Archaeology*: Netherton Chapel (1993); Woollashill Chapel (1995) and Grafton Chapel (1996). Anyone interested in contacting the author, Bruce Watson, should write to *Church Archaeology*.

List of churches in Largs

An alphabetical list, 'Largs Buildings', which includes archaeological information about earlier and existing churches has been compiled by the Largs & District Historical Society. It can be inspected at the Largs Museum, Manse Court, Largs, KA30 8AW, during opening hours (2pm – 5pm daily June – August) and at other times by arrangement.

Medieval Europe 1997

Following the success of the Medieval Europe 1992 conference held in York, a follow-up conference, Medieval Europe 1997, is to be held on 1–4 October 1997 in Brugge, Belgium. Covering the period 400–1800 AD, the conference will embrace themes such as religion and belief, death and burial, art and symbolism, exchange and trade, technology and organisation, and travel.

Details are available from Medieval Europe 1997, Instituut Archeologisch Patrimonium, Doornveld 1, bus 30, B-1731 Asse-Zellik, Belgium, Tel + (32) 2 463 13 33, Fax + (32) 2 463 19 51.

Books on churches

David Greenhalgh produces a regular stocklist of secondhand books covering all aspects of church archaeology, architecture and history. From stained glass to gothic architecture, bellringing to church furniture, this is an invaluable source for out of print and antiquarian books. For a copy of the latest list contact David Greenhalgh at 33 King

George Street, Greenwich, London,
SE10 8QD, Tel 0181 692 2474.

Oxfordshire wall paintings

A recent Oxfordshire County Council leaflet by Carol Rosier on wall paintings provides a useful historical introduction, advice on conservation and a list of places to visit. For a copy of the leaflet contact Carol Rosier, The Centre for Oxfordshire Studies, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford, OX1 1DJ, Tel 01865 815749.