

maining base clay was covered with fibre glass, which extended vertically over the sides of the plinth, down as far as the datum horizontal.

The consolidation and lifting of the kiln took two months. In the museum it has been allowed to dry out naturally and the cracks which appeared during this stage were filled, as on the site, with soil and consolidant. This completed, the fibre glass sections have been re-united on a plinth with the kiln segments fitted on to them for display.

The kiln is currently on view in the Horniman Museum, Forest Hill, S.E.23, as part of a temporary exhibition **Fire and Clay**.

The Horniman Museum has received generous assistance throughout this project from the Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee of the Corporation of London, from their staff in Highgate Wood and from the excavation teams under the direction of Anthony Brown and Harvey Sheldon.



Stage 5—Making a glass-fibre cast of the foundation.

Crossness Pumping Engine House

By ALAN THOMAS

ANOTHER splendid example of mid-Victorian engineering is currently in that uneasy limbo between demolition and restoration.

This time it is the Crossness pumping station (TQ 484811), out on the Erith marshes. When it was opened, with a great deal of ceremony, by the Prince of Wales in 1865, the station stood in the middle of a wildfowlers' paradise: now, with Thamesmead on its doorstep, it is uncompromisingly in urban London.

For most of its years Crossness, with four huge beam engine pumps, took a leading part in lifting south London's sewage out of the Southern Outfall. But unlike its better known counterpart on the north bank, the Abbey Pumping Station, Crossness was never modernised. To the day the last engine made its last stroke in 1953 Crossness remained an unspoiled, although little known, tribute to its designer and builders.

Fortunately neither the London County Council nor its successor, the Greater London Council have had the heart to demolish the station. Less fortunately neither body has been able to devote any money to its upkeep. Now the vast engine house,

with its great engines and splendid cast iron tracery screens, stands neglected. Layers of rust and filth lie everywhere and the Thames, at every high tide, invades the basement. More importantly, the roof is beginning to leak.

So the time is rapidly approaching when the decision must be made whether Crossness can survive. A full-scale restoration would be an expensive business, and there is little hope of anything like an adequate sum being made available. The best that can be hoped for is a holding operation, aimed at preventive the situation worsening. If the Council agree and begin work the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society intends to offer assistance in preliminary cleaning and recording.

The Society is also preparing a report for submission to the Council explaining why the Station is historically important, and suggesting ways of phasing a full restoration—including steaming the engines—over a period of years.

GLIAS would be interested to hear of any other societies interested in supporting this venture. The Secretary's address is 20 Chestnut Grove, Wembley, Middlesex.