

# Mosaic

## TWO NEW MUSEUMS

IN the past year west Essex has gained two new museums — at Waltham Abbey and at Upminster. The Waltham Abbey Museum, at 41 Sun Street, has been open at weekends since July 1975, and is leased to the Waltham Abbey Historical Society by the local council. In its first six months as a museum it had over five thousand visitors, clearly demonstrating the need for a museum in the town. Work carried out by the Society's volunteers on the interior of this timber-framed house has revealed that it is much earlier than was at first thought — late 14th to mid 15th century rather than 16th century, and it is probably the oldest building in the town.

A successful campaign by the Society has led to the building being up-graded from listed grade II to grade II\*, the grading of the adjacent building as grade II for the first time, and the withdrawal of two applications for redevelopment. Although the building's future now seems secure, its future as a museum is less so: planning permission for use as a museum is due for renewal in May, and access could become difficult when the surrounding area is redeveloped.

Coincidentally, the second museum is also in a 15th century building, in this case the Tithe Barn in Hall Lane, Upminster. It's the Upminster Tithe Barn Agricultural and Folk Museum, and after the official opening on 1 May it will be open to the public for some weekends from June to September (see Diary for details of opening times).

Further information can be obtained from (Waltham Abbey) John Camp, 306a Fulwell Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex and (Upminster) Mrs. F. Caldwell, 84 Park Drive, Upminster, Essex.

## NEW L.A.M.A.S. COMMITTEE

THE L.A.M.A.S. Archaeological Research Committee has set up a Working Group to enquire into the employment of archaeologists in London. They will examine methods of funding for Rescue archaeology in Greater London the adequacy of employment and future staffing needs in the area. It is proposed to hold enquiries amongst staff, employees and grant-awarding bodies. The Working Group consists of John Kent, Irene Schwab, Harvey Sheldon and Alan Tribe.

## LONDON BRASS RUBBING CENTRES

IN the basement hall of the vestry of St. James's Church, Piccadilly is one of five Brass Rubbing Centres established by the Historical Reproduction Group of Cirencester; the other four centres are at Christ Church, Lancaster Gate (opened in April) and in Bristol, Oxford and Stratford.

Twenty-two replicas which are made of polyester resin and a mixture of sintered metals to achieve the same appearance as the original, lie scattered all over the floor of the crypt. In the cheerfully informal atmosphere 60 to 120 people of all ages come to take rubbings each day. During the week tourists seem to make up the majority, but natives are in the preponderance at weekends.

Admission is free, but a charge varying from 35p (for a small brass) to £3 (for a 7ft. long knight) is made for each rubbing. This fee includes instruction, the cost of materials and a royalty to the appropriate church: in addition a percentage goes to St. James's. The Centre is open

each day all summer, Monday to Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sundays midday to 6 p.m.

Also recently opened is the independent Greenwich Brass Rubbing Centre, which should be especially attractive to school parties. The Centre can accommodate 15 children at a time and for £9.72 a school can book exclusive use of the centre, together with all materials, for a 90 minute session. Replica brasses can also be hired for between £1 and £2.50 per day. If a whole class comes, they can take it in turns while the others visit the Cutty Sark or Greenwich Hospital. The Centre's founders both have teaching experience, and the Centre has tables at a convenient height for people in wheelchairs. Individual visitors are also welcome: the charge for a rubbing (including all materials) ranges from under £1 for a small brass to just over £3 for the very largest. Opening hours are 12-5 p.m., seven days a week, and the address is 15 Nelson Road, SE10. Advance booking is desirable: phone 858 2141.

## HERITAGE WALKS

THE average Londoner's acquaintance with the City of London is probably rather scanty, and he may well be more familiar with it below ground than above. Even those of us who work in the City will probably admit to surprising gaps in our knowledge outside the immediate areas of station, office and pub or sandwich bar.

We now have the chance to put things right with the aid of two 'Heritage Walks,' laid out by the Corporation's Department of Architecture and Planning as their contribution to European Architectural Heritage Year. The routes are marked by metal studs let into the pavement, and leaflets with maps of the routes and notes on the main points of interest can be obtained from the City Information Centre, St. Paul's Churchyard.

Route No. 1 goes through Bank, Leadenhall Market and Monument, is 1½ miles long and takes about an hour to walk. Route No. 2 is slightly longer — 2¼ miles, or 1½ hour's walking — and features St. Paul's Cathedral, Smithfield, Barbican and Guildhall. The City Churches are well represented, and some of the more noteworthy modern developments are included (the rest are mercifully omitted).

Both walks carefully steer the visitor away from the ravaged areas of Upper and Lower Thames Street and the Thames frontage: odd for a city that owes its origins and growth to its maritime trading links. Perhaps one day we will have a city fit for pedestrians to live in.

## GREATER LONDON AREA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THE MEMBERS of the Area Advisory Committee for Greater London, formed to give advice to the Department of the Environment on the use of the limited Government funds available for rescue archaeology, are:

Chairman: Professor David M. Wilson (Professor of Medieval Archaeology, University of London).

A. F. Arbour	Ralph Merrifield
B. A. Baker	Valerie Pearl
Caroline Barron	R. M. Robbins
Professor W. F. Grimes	C. Skillbeck
Professor F. R. Hodson	Professor J. J. Wilkes

## TESSERA E

To help co-ordinate the professional units — a Standing Conference of Unit Managers has been formed: obviously nothing will stop a good archaeologist floating to the top!