

# Mosaic

## HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD FOR GREATER LONDON

THE LACK OF a Sites and Monuments Record for Greater London was recognised in 1976, when it was stated in the joint working party report, *Time on our Side? A Survey of the Archaeological needs of Greater London*, that 'First and foremost a central Sites and Monuments Index is needed for the whole of Greater London.' Such a record would include essential information on all known sites and finds and would be an invaluable tool for those working in the fields of archaeological excavation and research, education, planning and development control. The considerable resources required by such a project have proved a stumbling-block so far. Happily, the increased commitment to archaeology shown by the G.L.C. means that at last the necessary ground-work for the establishment of the Record is now being carried out.

For several years, the G.L.C. Historic Buildings Division has been aware of the need for a computerised database covering all aspects of the historic environment in Greater London including buildings and associated features, gardens, open-spaces and archaeological sites and finds with appropriate arrangements for public access to the Record. The scale of the project is vast, however great the resources which can be made available, but from the outset it has been regarded as fundamental that both historic buildings and archaeological sites should be included in the integrated Record.

In June 1983, supported by G.L.C. funding, a post as Research Assistant was established at the Museum of London to make a preliminary assessment of the scale of the problem in Greater London so far as archaeology is concerned. Also in 1983, the G.L.C. took responsibility for funding a project for an archaeological bibliography for Greater London with a view to incorporating references in the Record. In September 1983, Nigel Clubb was appointed to the G.L.C. staff to take responsibility for the Historic Buildings Division's existing records and to co-ordinate the requirements of those concerned with statutory historic buildings work and historians with the archaeological aspects of the computerised Record.

The preliminary archaeological survey involved assessing the location, scope, quality and accessibility of existing records. It was necessary to contact all professional and amateur organisations which might have an interest or involvement in archaeology. Almost 200 local historical and archaeological societies, local authorities and museums have been approached so far and the result has been most encouraging. The picture emerging (perhaps not surprisingly!) is one of great range in the quality of records available from the well-organised, comprehensive and up-to-date to the complete opposite. All records will be searched for information with detailed checking as appropriate, for the comprehensive Record. Some measure of the scale of the project has been gained from the multiplicity of sources, the wide geographical area and the wealth of Greater London's archaeological heritage.

It is very likely that a number of organisations and sources have been overlooked and it would be helpful if persons with a knowledge of these could contact Peter James at the Museum of London. Thanks are due to all those who have allowed access to their record systems for the preliminary survey.

It is hoped that resources will shortly be made available to commence the mammoth task of actually collecting the data for input to the G.L.C. computer.

PETER JAMES

## ESSAY COMPETITION

THE WEST ESSEX Archaeological Group is offering two prizes each of £10 and one year's free membership to fifth and sixth formers studying in the London Boroughs of Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest, in an essay competition on archaeology. The essay is not to exceed 3000 words and may be on one of five topics ranging from the legacy of Romans, Saxons and Normans, to an account of an archaeological excavation in the London area. For further information or for full details of the competition (closing date 31 March 1984) apply to the Secretary:-

Miss Joan Barker  
17 Rosslyn Avenue  
Chingford E4 6DX

## WANTED: YOUR GREAT GREAT UNCLE'S LETTER

THE FOUNDATION FOR AGE RESEARCH — A charitable trust set up to encourage and raise funds for medical research into the disabilities of the elderly — is appealing for documents, letters, diaries or photographs that form a valuable part of Britain's heritage. Such treasures often lie forgotten in the cellars, attics, drawers, safes and deed boxes of country mansions, cottages, bank vaults, solicitors' offices, warehouses or other buildings.

The documents are wanted for auction on behalf of the Foundation at appropriate auctions run by Robson Lowe, who is generously offering the Foundation its services free, with proceeds from suitable items — ideally in their original covers — either donated outright to the Foundation or, if preferred, divided equally between it and the donor. Either way the money raised will be used to finance further vital research in the hope of making retirement healthier and therefore happier.

In the first instance potential donors are invited to write, giving details as to subject, date, condition, etc. to John Allfrey at the Foundation for Age Research, 49 Queen Victoria Street, London, EC4N 3SQ, marking the envelope "Documentary Heritage Auction".

## LLOYDS BANK FUND FOR INDEPENDENT ARCHAEOLOGISTS

The Fund set up by Lloyds Bank in 1978 for five years has been extended for a further three years and the sum available is now £2,000 per annum. It is administered by the Royal Archaeological Institute on behalf of the Bank, and grants are made annually to assist local Societies and voluntary groups to purchase equipment which is broadly defined to include items used in field work, excavation, post-excavation work leading to publication; maps, aerial photographs, record cards, etc.

For further information and an application form write to: Miss W. E. Phillips, Assistant Secretary, 304 Addison House, Grove End Road, St John's Wood, London, NW8 9EL.