

Early Saxon settlement in Hammersmith

TRIAL EXCAVATION, supervised by Neil Bugler for the Museum of London's Department of Greater London Archaeology, on a site at Winslow Road, 300m (1000ft) downstream of Hammersmith Bridge, have located traces of an important early Saxon settlement next to the Thames.

The work, which is funded by D & H Construction Ltd and Petmoor Developments Ltd, has revealed a series of features cut into a thin deposit of silty clay or brick earth which mantles the Floodplain gravel in the area. They comprise several ditches, pits and postholes, together with perhaps as many as five sunken-featured buildings (SFBs). It is likely that further such features exist in the areas not yet explored.

Although work is at a relatively early stage, the features examined so far – principally the SFBs – have produced much pottery and well-preserved animal bones. The pottery, which has been provisionally assigned to the 5th and 6th centuries, comprises both plain and decorated vessels in sand- and vegetable-tempered fabrics. The animal bone, which included part of an articulated horse skeleton, appears to display traces of butchery in the form of cut marks. Other finds include fragments of clay loomweight, teeth from a bone comb, a copper alloy pin, a circular lead weight and lead scrap, a small yellow glass bead, an iron buckle and several Roman coins.

Soil samples taken from all features should enable the recovery of carbonised cereal grains and provide evidence of the arable economy of the site to complement that of the pastoral side provided by the animal bone.

The site is likely to add substantially to our knowledge of the early Saxon period in London as a whole, and can probably best be compared, in terms of location and date, with the single SFBs recorded in riverside locations at Brentford and Ham, between five and eight miles upstream.

The Department's thanks go to D & H Construction Ltd and Petmoor Developments Ltd for funding the work, and to Dr David Gabbay of the former for his interest and cooperation throughout.

Two new television series

BBC CHILDREN'S Television will be transmitting a new 6-episode series, *Now Then* in December and January. The series will follow the adventures of two modern children as they encounter children who inhabited each of the selected archaeological locations, with re-enactments of the histories of the sites. The sites, which were chosen by the presenter, Tony Gregory, are Hoyle's Mouth (Palaeolithic), Skara Brae (Neolithic), Flag Fen (Bronze Age), Birdoswald (Roman), West Heslerton (Saxon) and the medieval merchant's house in Southampton. Costumes and props have been made at the Heritage Workshops in York.

For the grown-ups, Thames Television is to produce a new series for peak-time transmission on Channel 4, provisionally called *Down to Earth*, starting in November. Presented by Catherine Hills, the series will deal with all aspects of archaeology in a magazine format. Topics to be covered will include new discoveries, theories and controversies, techniques, new exhibitions and how to get involved. Each edition will be produced and edited on the day of transmission, to ensure maximum topicality.

After a rather quiet period in televised archaeology recently, the appearance of two new series this winter is very welcome.

Another first for York

FOLLOWING THE runaway success of the Jorvik Viking Centre, now six years old, the York Archaeological Trust made another innovative step in making archaeology accessible to the public when it opened the ARC (Archaeological Resource Centre) in April. In

the converted medieval church building of St. Saviour's, visitors can handle and sort finds, try their hand at traditional crafts or explore sites by means of computers, while around them archaeologists go about their daily business. As a way of helping the public, and perhaps especially children, to understand what archaeology is really about, this venture deserves to succeed and to be widely imitated.

Trouble in South Kensington

ONE STEP FORWARD for York, but one backwards for London. The archaeological science community was shaken when in April the Natural History Museum revealed its corporate plan for 1990-95. Its research programme was cut to six themes and archaeozoology was declared a "redundant unit". It appears that there will be no more research, advisory service or expert curation in this area, although the Museum has the largest collection of fossil and recent bird and mammal skeletal material in the world, as well as large assemblages of animal remains from important archaeological sites. The future of the collections is now uncertain.

Sporting Museums in London

THE LONDON Museums Service has just published the latest leaflet in its series *What to See in London's Local Museums*, entitled *Sporting Pastimes*. As well as museums devoted to one particular sport, like the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum, the Rugby Museum at Twickenham and the MCC Museum, there is information on sporting collections and exhibits at well-known museums, and some lesser-known ones. The publication has been supported by the Sports Council.

Undergraduate course on the archaeology of London

QUEEN MARY and Westfield College has announced the establishment of a new 40-lecture undergraduate course on "The Archaeology of Roman and Medieval London". It has been developed with Gustav Milne of the Museum of London as a unit in the archaeological course run by the Department of Mediterranean Studies. If it proves successful, it could lead to further joint ventures. For further details, contact: Department of Medieval Studies, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS.

A new warehouse for Southwark

AS DEVELOPMENT progresses eastwards from London Bridge, the Southwark and Lambeth team of the Department of Greater London Archaeology has had to move both its office and its warehouse. The latest move is to a new warehouse at Canada Yard South, behind the new Surrey Quays Shopping Centre. There are two buildings, one for finds and environmental staff and storage space for finds from recent excavations, and one for tools and finds from old sites. Access is from Quebec Road, off Redriff Road. The new telephone number is 071 252 3791.

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