



# THE WEEKLY WHISPER



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Friends, Romanists, and Coventrymen; lend me your eyes; we are pleased to introduce two new featurers in this our fourth issue! One is the "BONHILL BANTER" from our brethren in that part of the world, and the other has begged leave to introduce itself, a favour we shall gladly grant forthwith?

## The D. U. A. DRIBBLES.

Dear lively, friendly, intelligent and now bigheaded readers, as you are all aware, at present swarming over the G.M. is a wierd conglomeration of persons known as the Department of Urban Archaeology. This complex establishment regards itself as a seperate enterprise totally independant and in a class of its own, so, with great pleasure, dark fear and an overdose we bring you the...D.U.A. DRIBBLES! And what better way to christen this new addition to the W.W. than with a few words from the Master himself Mr. Brian (Planks) Hobley:

### A BLESSED BIRTH

"The W.W. no.3 has just come into my hands by accident as it was circulated War Cry fashion in the Plough pub. How did I miss the previous numbers? Thinks- what else is going on in the Dept. unnoticed by your tired establishment figure? The mind boggles!!

What a delight it was to read: the literary style and professional illustrations will make it an eagerly sought after publication, and not only by staff.

The publication of our excavations and research is the primary objective of our department. In concerning myself with the "heavy stuff" it never occurred to me to produce a staff news sheet- ugh! Now I know how much we needed it. Far better that it was produced spontaneously and in the present "underground" style, being both humourous and informative. Might I suggest you invite your remote headquarters staff to contribute the odd light-hearted article?

There is always a need for good communication between friends and colleagues. Working in the City makes for great problems for socially intergrating our forty or so strong team. The W.W. will bring us closer together (whoops! Another Freudian slip!) through a light hearted approach to our work. Let us enjoy our life as archaeologists- our work will be better for it. I look foward to the 100th. May 1,000th. issue!"

BRIAN HOBLEY

Chief Urban Archaeologist.

( thanks planks!)

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Book Of The Week:

"A GOOD LOOK AT THE D.U.A."

by C.D.S. Tablishment.

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"Trowelific!" - Current Arch.

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Well, hello Darlings- here we are at last to show the world that behind all that Dekiou shelving lurk as noble a band of fellow Utopians, philanderers and transvestites as you could hope to encounter 'neath the emulsified banner bright of conservation. Which would seem a suitable moment to introduce that distinguished member of A.S.T.M.S. (ANTEDILUVIAN SOCIETY FOR THE TREATMENT OF MOULDERING SARCOPHAGI) and newly appointed Finds Officer to field div. 2 of the new London Unit for urbane archaeologists, Michael Rhodes. Mike provides in his unassuming way that jellimeat whiskas combination of confidence, encyclopaedic knowledge and charm which is indeed the keynote of our organization up here at Bonhill Street, and indeed in his role as the Harry Lime of London Archeology, he maintains the whole vital network of archaeological interaction between here, the sites and the Kremlin, with a diplomatic nonchalance aided only by his omniscient umbrella.

Which brings us to a topic which is becoming difficult to avoid at B. St. these days, viz: WATER- a subject that has driven a nameless member of our staff to the verge of Panicide. (By the way, he asks me to tell you that his name is Howard, and you can call round anytime.) His nubile form is oft to be seen draped across the end of a tank whence issue moans sighs and "You don't know what all this washing is doing to my hands".-Perhaps Ricardo has a hint or two for him?- He also suffers from delusions that he is a victim to the plotting wiles of the Eae-Glycol family in the persons of Polly and Ethel. More of this next week.

Peter (BOATS) Marsden may also be glad of Ricardo's advice-since the appearance of a bald patch in recent photographs he is tortured by the idea of becoming scheduled as an Ancient Mon. However, in the intervals, he dreams of a floating brothel and has perked up considerably to see his very own rival to the Essex Gravy Boat laid out ship-shape and Bristol fashion (?) on the floor at last.

Fashion/Beauty wise: latest regulation issue at B.St. :- rubber gloves and barrier cream- we await the arrival of pastel-coloured wet-suits and and free waterproof mascara.

So much for the old wrecks (and I assure you the Unit has a lot to answer for..)

Upstairs, amid fantastic vistas of steel cabinets and trendy stripped pine drawing boards, the work of recording, reconstruction and preparation of the best finds for Auction combines in an atmosphere of Augustan serenity broken only by the distant lapping of the waves on the side of the water tank below. The notice on the door displays a Before-And-After photograph of a Roman writing tablet which "after the minute attentions of the entire staff with a steel toothcomb revealed a minute by minute account of the Boudiccan Rape of London, with maps and illustrations" followed by a list of charges. The other side reads "Not dead but sleeping" a well-known quotation from the motto of the Society of Antiquarians.

NEXT WEEK- Howard the Hull Raiser writes on the N.F.W. Boat !!!

The TRIANGLE WHISPER

The end of the month means curtains for the Magnificent Seven, as far as their licence to dig their current hole goes, but it will bring fame everlasting if those little lumps of ragstone can be persuaded to look more like the Roman River Wall. The med. well has been removed gently but swiftly by the gent in the blue velvet suit-Itell not a word of a lie-to reveal more of its wattle-and-daub forebear. Pete's amazing ability to start the crane first time everytime- which he recently described as "insane really"- has now been matched by young Davy, Charles, three-days-no-sick-pay-the-poorer (Union meeting May 25th.!) is back but not for long as his Mediterranean cruise departs in a couple of weeks, and Chrissie would like a name check as she did suggest the "Don't say B. say H." caption in the first place.

STOP PRESS:

At the V.I.P. studded A.G.M. of our sister paper the LONDON ARCHAEOLOGIST last Friday, the fame of our WEEKLY WHISPER was spread a little further..

## The TRIGGERS WHISPER

The training course for A.S.S.'s at Trig Lane continues in spite of Richard (pink boots & body stocking) Blurton's narrow escape from death 'neath a 17th. century drain and the regrettable running down(?) of the Olympick Games. Information about the latter event indicates that Peter Muir must be commended for trying very hard, and Graham-full-of-the-joys-of-violence-Troillet on winning everything. (School, three cheers for the head butch, hip hip,). He appears to be the man(!!) to contact should anyone have two buckets of spoil or a loaded wheel barrow to be taken anywhere. If, on the other hand, you've a 16 LB hammer that needs to be thrown, and let's face it you never know these days, once again it's Mr.T. for you. Or supposing, just supposing he's late, you could always try Martin, or dear old Patrick Moore himself.

We also hear that a certain "sex Bomb from New York" not only wakes Mr. Oppé with a kiss, but is also in charge of Finds, and has no comment to make about the beads, bronze necklace, thimbles and gold ring she was seen sporting recently. We wish her a very Happy Birthday whenever it is, and while on the subject of Happy Events, our Very Best Wishes must go out to Mr. and Mrs. Great Expectations on or about Saturday. Why not a special Alice in Wonderland feature to mark the occasion? Oh well, two's company, three's fun as they say.

Hilary's still armed to the teeth, Steve John and Allan are as dedicated as ever, Mandrax was last seen heading for Belfast (who did put their hands on her etchings?), Des Woods is back on the job, and nobody since the dizzy days of Steam Roland has profited from a tea break. Oh, and a C15th box drain plus some other interesting timber structures are appearing, which will give the hopefully new improved photographer something to click about.



This week's Harrisonian wall painting is similar to one which nearly appeared in an earlier issue, and shows, yes you've guessed it, that proud younger-looking than ever Father-to-be, Digger, Linguist & Al Boley fanatic, PETER ELLIS. Peter, who went to a jolly good school and has a season ticket is a moderately extreme left-winger (more about the football whisper later), and comes from Sydenham via Crystal Palace.

Last Friday's slide show was superb: we were most impressed with Mark Harrison's vast knowledge of astronomy and astronautics, not to mention Penny (You are a caution) Wyatt's wit. We need not dwell on such comments as "I remember when Mars was 4d", but express genuine thanks for a fine evening. Thanks also for Peter, for the projector, and Marc for the wall without which etc. etc.

## SMALL FINDS....

\*\*\*\*\*Next Friday, May 17th., all are warmly invited to an informal discussion cum-"Rescue"-slide show at the Architeute of Instaeology in Gordon Square. This should prove to be a very informative, not to mention entertaining evening as the compere is Charles Hill- you have met Charles haven't you? Rescue is an organisation that we should all be members of anyway- it's in our own interests. They are the only non-Govt, backed organisation that really works for diggers- since their inception in 1972, the DoE grant to Archaeology rose from £210,000 to £1,005,000, largely as a result of their pressure. See you Friday-a splendid time is guaranteed for all!!

\*\*\*\*\*We were deeply shocked to learn of the "Death of Geraldo" in the news media recently- great was our relief on discovering 'twas but a bandleader and not our dearly beloved that was not lost, but gorn before.

\*\*\*\*\*EXCHANGE AND MARTIN DEPT: Graham Troilet has a very fine Morris 1100 to sell for £75...Gustav Milne would like to buy a camera.

\*\*\*\*\*A football team (We put the Unit into United) is to be produced to rush around the country breathing goodwill, alcohol and ripping sportsmanship in the faces of distant diggers and things. Trials will be held-all jolly formal, but super fun- in Southwark or Tabard Park on TUESDAY AFTER WORK. So, all you Possibles and Probables, boys, girls or whatever, don't forget your plimmies, and keep in touch for fuller details!!

\*\*\*\*\*Alas poor demolition workers- our Irish comrades high on the N.F.W. building are doing their thing while the electricity is still on, cos somebody put their spoil heap all over the main power point so they can't turn it off....For those interested, a rather massive crane hoisted two smaller cranes onto the roof, where they now sit, gaily waving their 1½ ton steel balls hither and thither. All very exciting.

\*\*\*\*\*Two Annes from B.St. share a birthday this week- anyone wishing to drink their health (or their Own) may do so at the Skinners Arms, Mansion House, this Friday, i.e. tonite!!

\*\*\*\*\*We have received an article from the pen of the "Guildhall Amateur Rapist"- attempts to reveal his true identity have been fruitless as everyone challenged so far has insisted that they were all professionals. The article was quite excellent, and may be seen on request in the W.W. offices at WHISPERING HEIGHTS, 10 OFFORD ROAD, LONDON N.1., but we dare not publish it as we are chicken. However, keep them contributions rollin'-your response has been magnificent- only time, space and Lord Longford prevent us from publishing everything-thanks again for all your articles ideas, staples, encouragment- never in the field of human conflict etc..

\*\*\*\*\*John-Hastings-Harmer was sighted in Northampton still looking for a boat to take him away from all this. It's an early June number now.

\*\*\*\*\*I say, our Hero- we refer to Mr. Taylor of course- recalls that, when he was a lad, his family motto was "While we're alive, let's live in clover, cos when your'e dead, your'e dead all over". Be that as it may, while he was on National Service in Malaya, he did not see eye to eye with his sergeant. While on parade one day, the following military two-step ensued:-SERGEANT:"Do you fancy me Taylor?"

PRIVATE T.:"Oh don't be thilly tharge."

After leaving the army, he tried pedalling Calvinism to the Catholics in Sothern Ireland (he swears the I.R.A. are still after him), bumming meals of passing convents etc., and doing various odd jobs. One such money spinner was as a life model in an Art College, but one day, while striking a classic pose, his shorts disintegrated, and 'twas only after a comely young maiden had ministered unto him with a chiffon scarf and numerous safety pins that calm and creativity were restored.

Terry Sigillatas pottery workers at Beatrix have been complaining about the standard of canteen food, so our hero has persuaded Christopher Robin, the catering chief, to have a word with Vini Lezoux, the hunter, in an effort to procure a change of diet from the perpetual boar. NOW READ ON.....

As soon as Mr. Robin had disappeared from view, the proud hunter ran to the cottage where his two brothers lived, and they answered his knock on the door. "I've come," said Vini. "So I see," replied Vedi. "Trouble at mill?" suggested Venci, "Pray enter and sit down! Would you care for some refreshment? White or red?" Vini, who was not renowned for his discerning palate, asked for his usual, which was a mixture, and once the thirsty threesome had availed themselves of an amphorae or two he presented a more or less coherent account of the earlier meeting, with Christopher Robin, including his promise to provide piglets in future. A barrage of questions followed: "But why choose piglets of all creatures?" "How do you propose catching them?" "How many will be needed per day to feed those greedy potters?" To which Vini replied that he didn't know, he wasn't sure, and he hadn't worked it out. Vedi looked at Venci and shook his head. Venci looked at Vedi and nodded, then stood up to address the meeting. "Be of good heart my brother, all is not lost! Just as the Sun must follow the Rain, just as Day must follow Night, so must an answer follow every problem!" He sat down to a round of genuine applause and everybody felt much better. It was soon agreed that the best solution was to be found in some active fieldwork, or rather forestwork, so Vini Lezoux led his two brothers to his hideout explaining the intricacies of boaring as they went along- they didn't deal with the hunting side of things as a rule, being fully tied up with the administration, ergonomic and market research end of the business. "When you want to catch a boar," he pointed out, "You dig a boar hole; cover it with branches and bracken, sprinkling a few acorns in the middle. Then you just wait for something big and fat to fall in." "Hmm..Most interesting.... ( Venci was definitely the brains of the organisation and knew it.)..Presumably all that is required is a simple modification, viz: a smaller hole, thus rendering the capture of a big boar impossible, and the capture of a small tender piglet certain!" They'd hardly finished congratulating themselves on solving the problem so simply and so soon, when Vini, whom Nature had blessed with a superb sense of hearing if little else, stood bolt upright and motioned to his brothers to be quiet. He tiptoed to a thicket a few yards away, peered inside, then ran noiselessly back to his companions. "Quick!" he hissed, "There's a piglet grubbing around in there- give me the spade and I'll dig a hole in front of him!" "There's no time for a controlled excavation," replied Venci, "Use your spear!" He thrust the powerful weapon into his hands, but the offer was declined. "I couldn't kill him with that- he's got such lovely eyes". With that, the backwoodsman slinked over to the thicket and scooped up the creature, holding it firmly in his arms. He stood their triumphantly and called his brothers over to examine the fine specimen. The piglet DID have such lovely eyes. Venci had never been one for blood sports, and Vedi had often considered becoming a veggie. "You always feel so much healthier after a salad." he pointed out. Becoming as all this sentiment was, it was not going to feed the Beatrix Pottery. They had to find something more acceptable than piglet, or piglet it would have to be. "How about roots?" suggested Vini, "After all, some animals eat them all the time. Pigs love things like that". He pointed to a black, lumpy object in the ground, which had been half exposed by the piglet. Venci, who studied botany in his spare time, picked it up and tasted it. "HMM.." he declared, "Tuberaceae Melansporum- the potters want piglets: let them have Truffles which is exactly what happened. Vini Lezoux trained his pet- whom he called Piglet, incidentally, as it seemed to suit him- to sniff out the truffles, and Vedi and Venci arranged for them to be attractively packaged and sent to the hungry potters.

We are pleased to report that the delicacy was greeted with unrestrained delight by Terry Sigilatta's grateful workers, and the standard of pottery attained new heights thereafter. Terry, who now insisted on a hot crusty truffle roll everyday, thanked Christopher Robin personally. The latter, who was always pleased to be of service to somebody, beamed and said: "My dear Mr. Sigilatta, for a customer as good as you, nothing is too much truffle".