

THE WEEKLY WHISPER



"THE DIGGER'S FRIEND"

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ON TURNING THE PUBLIC ONTO PUBLICITY

To whom it may concern:-

Wherever one or two holes are dug, there shall the public be also; and who can name a digger who has not been asked if he's found any gold, is it Roman, is he a student and isn't it amazing what you find? We at least would like to agree wholeheartedly with the last statement, it IS amazing what we find, which obviously enough is why we do the things we do. That the much maligned General Public are also amazed should not be the cause of irritation but of Hope, nay, Joy! Their casual interest should and must be forged into a passionate concern: we believe we have a DUTY to provide the knowledge sought by any onlooker: to enlighten their darkness and cultivate their goodwill should be considered as much a part of our work as the actual digging, ~~if~~ even if only for the reason that Public Opinion = Public Money. (We confess for our part we would also call upon fundamental philosophic issues et cetera).

Now, we are not fool enough to propose that shovelling should stop each time a question is thrown at us, but suggest the following obvious solution viz: a noticeboard covered by 1) an introduction to the London Unit and its needs and deeds; 2) a BRIEF outline of Roman, Saxon and Medieval London; 3) the purpose of the particular dig to which the board is attached with the results achieved to date; 4) a "DIG FOR VICTORY" poster, specially designed for us (~~and~~ with the kind permission of the Imperial War Museum), to generate a note of campaigning urgency into our fight against modern deep-piling technics, etc.

We admit ~~that~~ that the idea of a noticeboard is unoriginal in the extreme: but it is also as cheap to produce as it is invaluable in promoting goodwill; the novelty is surely that we persist in persuing our Trappist vows. No Excavation without Publication? No Crater without Data!

W.W. ENTERPRISES present some FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS that should on no account be missed!!!

THIS FRIDAY, MAY 17th: the 'Skinners' for a farewell to Gerald evening.

NEXT FRIDAY, MAY 24th: Our own Charles Hill telling us informally and with slides all about "Rescue and Things. At the Institute, Gordon Square, 7.30ish

SATURDAY MAY 25th: Our national "union meeting" at last. Institute all day- say no more.

FRIDAY MAY 31st: The football season kicks off with a Londinium All Stars XI playing a Rest of The World XI, featuring Southwark and Surrey in particular. The event will be celebrated by a GRAND PARTY immediately afterwards, if we can borrow someones front room. Your presence at either or both occasions, not to mention the multitude of wondrous happenings that precede them, may well lead to alcoholism. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

the DUA DRIBBLES

collected by Miss Scamel

Tomorrow, and tomorrow...

Gazing into our crystal trowels for the redundant, grovelling in the mud, digging in the rain, potwashing loonies commonly referred to as "archaeologists", we bring you the whisper on future sites.

The principal avenues of research will be the origin of Roman London and the nature of the Roman occupation south of the Cripplegate fort. Work will also continue on waterfront sites such as Trig Lane, which remains till April 1975. New sites for the summer include 20 Bishopsgate and a large site at the G.P.O. H.Q. in Newgate Street Sept-Oct 1974-5. Others include St. Benets in Upper Thames Street, St. Annes in Queen Victoria Street, St. Mary-at-Hill in Lovat Lane, Wingate Centre, Minorities and Mansell Street. All this information is subject to the usual qualifications. We are also due to do 112 Lower Thames Street sometime but we're not sure of the Billingsgate car park and N.F.W. III story at the moment. The only firm conclusion we can draw is that there is plenty of it, wherever it is.

The conservation dept wish to make an urgent plea to all site directors to quit sending urgent bronze buttons for dating purposes!!!

The notorious zebra with jaundice alias M. Gutters was reported to have had great difficulty in entering his flat one night. It was revealed later that his smart city abode had been broken into and barracaded by security men?

Conversation in the G.M.

Arch: We also have what we call unstratified layers.

Enthralled schoolgirl: Oh...you keep hens too!?

Special offer to the Trig kids: The little conservationist and floater Barbie has promised to reveal the age of the once ageless Mark (Bomber astronomer) Harrison to the highest bidder.

There is no truth in the rumour that Tolkiens classic book The Hobbit was written in memoerium of our beloved CUA.

BOOK OF THE WEEK

"Here comes the CUA"

by C.M. RUNN. (ouch)

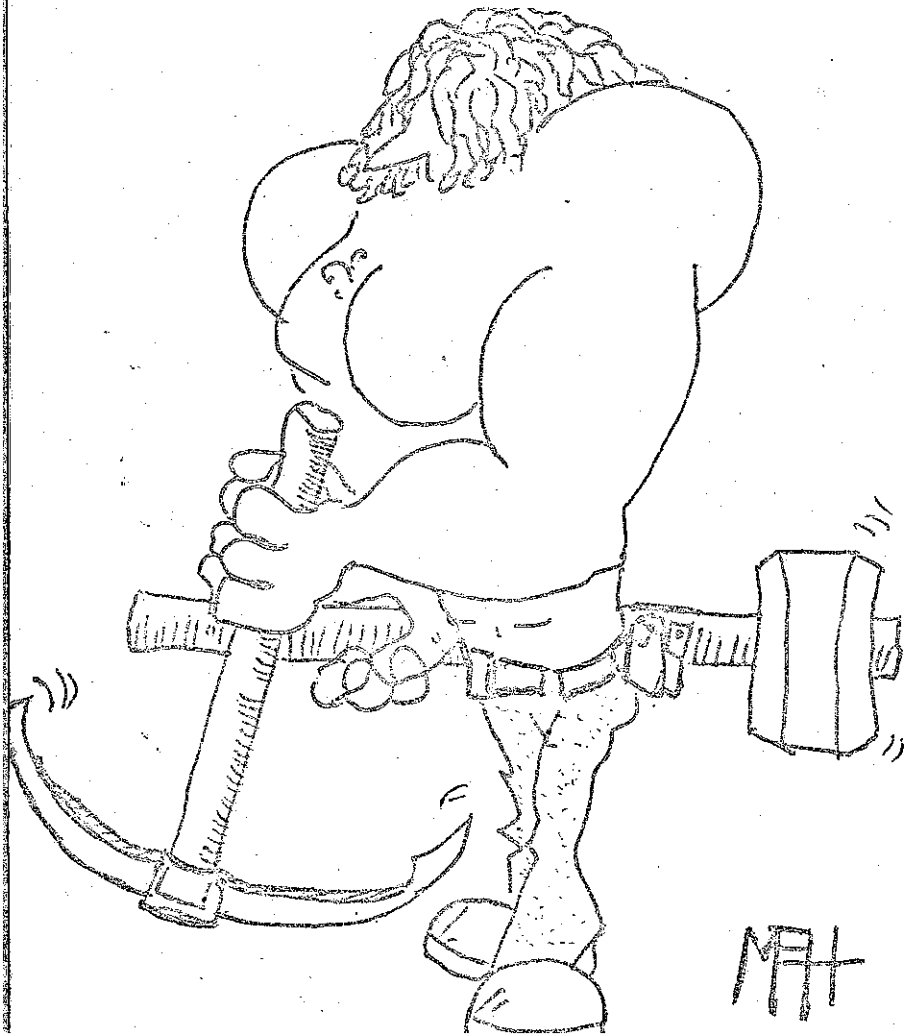
No. 1: The LEMUEL PEPYS, Lower Thames Street

by your libellous Gastronome, Peter Muir.

Diggers Incorporated of Trig Lane, after their brief flirtation with and expulsion from the LEP canteen (we don't serve strangers in cherry red shoes) have been forced back into eating at the Samuel Pepys. This recieves the Clenched Fist in my good food guide.

First of all, you cannot see, let alone breathe, in the sub-basement bar. This is a brick room tricked out with ridiculous curios which have nothing to do with Samuel Pepys or the enjoyment of alcohol. In fact their only conceivable purpose is to distract the gullible from checking their change or from the pence per cubic millimetre of the Lemuel's Veal & Ham Pie- 20p for a jinch by 3 by 4 brick. The sandwiches are all grossly overpriced, and the salads likewise. For the Lord's sake, avoid the salad dressing too: it's a toxic mixture of vinegar and K.Y. the universal lubricant. Beer is 20p a pint at weekends, and probably more during the week. Very nearly all the food disappears at weekends perhaps to compensate for the beer being cheaper: the only things to remain are the perennial Veal and Ham Pie, at a quid deal, and something retailing under the name of 'Baxters Steak & Kidney pie*~~xx~~' as supplied to her Majesty'. This is a mouth-watering melange of Monosodium Glutamate and various self important spices, emulsifiers and binders. The chemical content is so high that frequent digestion may cause gout, scrofula, impotency, loss of appetite or perhaps even early death.

If one is prepared to overlook the fact that one cannot see further than the length of one's arm, that it is usually so hot in the bar one could smelt pig iron, one cannot overlook the clientele. As Mr. John Oppe puts it, they look like a pin-striped rigger scrum. A word of warning too. Do not attempt to make a personal phone call on their machine, as every word can be heard, clear as a bell, in the Gents. Finally, the Samuel Pepys claims that it was part of the "gay informal atmosphere of his (Pepys') time". I can only remind W.W. readers of the ancient custom Pepys himself mentions in his diary- November 12th 1665: "did go with Jos. Hokins to the Lemuel. Did drink small beer which gave us the wind. Vomitted plentifully after partaking of a meat pie. Enjoyed myself muchly though, tossing pint glasses from the tavern's balcony onto the shores of the Thames."



Mark's pic this week is of a very well-spoken latin scholar and poetry reader who is our favourite part-timer. The pressures of studying for his M.A. and sharing magic moments with a certain Miss Wyatt forced him to relinquish his former dizzy status, but we shall always remember him as one of that great Triumvirate of Graham-Martin-and-Louise from you know where.

MUT

Howard the Hull-Raiser has sent us this report on the splendid Romano-saxon 12th. century Viking Longboat that turned up at NXXX.N.F.W. one day.

And so the workers of Bonhill Street have been lumbered with yet another boat. The New Fresh Wharf vessel, now occupying the festering tanks of the so called Marsdon Bunker, is waiting for the Unit's S.S. (Ship Specialists) to move in. But the discovery of yet another decaying hulk has posed the question that has baffled man since the dawn of time, or at least since the Blackfriars Barge was excavated; that is, just what sort of boat could sail under twenty feet of Thames mud, and why did these early people moor their boats at this depth? And why at an incredible 200 yards from the river? For the answer to this question, we must study the works of Heinrich von Scheppertsbusch, the nineteenth century German nautical non-entity.

To quote from Von Scheppertsbusch: "Hier ve haf ze early man, in his und always schtormy days imitating ze mole. He builds hiss boats in ze mud und schlime und den he waits for a vile, perhaps many viles, knowing zat someday, a lunatic vill find hiss boat und sink ~~ix~~ zat it really vas ein varter going vessel!"

^D Dr. Von Scheppertsbusch is 113 (not out).

Did you know that we are thinking of compiling a W.W. SONG BOOK? Carolyn of B. St. has sent in the following, which we consider to be quite supercali-fragilisticexpealidocious...

THE POT WASHERS SONG

A didactic ditty dedicated to all diggers: with apologies to W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan, to the tune of the Police Sergeants song from the Pirates of Penzance.

In Bonhill St. (its not to far from Moorgate- far from Moorgate)
There toils Mike Rhodes merry little band- little band
And there in time ~~ix~~ your finds all come soon or late- soon or late
To be washed and boxed by careful loving hand- loving hand.
Each sherd and bone look much like any other- any other,
And, we regret at times our job's not fun- Job's not fun;
And often taking one thing with another- with another
A potwashers lot is not a happy one.

chorus:-WHEN THERE'S PILES OF UNWASHED LEATHER TO BO DONE- TO BE DONE

A POTWASHERS LOT IS NOT A HAPPY ONE.- HAPPY ONE

When the digger is engaged in his employment- his employment,
We ask him just somtimes to think of us- think of us;
As we potter(!) round with innocent enjoyment-'cent enjoyment;
And perform allotted tasks with little fuss- little fuss.
But when you bring the finds in by the crateful- by the cratrfull
And dump them with the backlog not yet done-Not yet done,
Then our sentiments are very far from grateful- far from grateful
A potwashers lot is not a happy one.

chorus:-

The staff of this exclusive finds department- finds department
Are a cheery and harmonious little crew- little crew.
IN our luxury (third floor) penthouse appartment- 'house appartment
We heroes work with dedication true- 'cation true
We wash and bag and label with affection- with affection,
And take no little pride in jobs well done- jobs well done,
But when there's yet more Dexion fer erection- for erection,
A potwashers lot is not a happy one.

chorus:- WHEN THERE'S PILES etc.

Come on all you DUA Dribblers, Museum Murmerers and wet-suited whisperers,
let's see if you can do even better!!!!

***When the idea of a football team was first mooted, it did not, we fear, meet with universal approval: one young lady would rather 'twas a tiddly winks number, a proper gent suggested Wugger Chaps and an American dared to propose Baseball. However, in the true spirit of democracy, the dissident minorities were duly ignored and the trials (?) went ahead on Wednesday in Regent's Park. We're not exactly sure who the Possibles or the Probables were, but the team with more in beat the team with less in by about 3-7. The weather was lovely, and we're sorry if anybody was hurt when they tripped over our legs. Judging by the turnout, we have a lot of talent in the unit, and some useful footballers too, even though the star of Cambridge United couldn't make it. Personally, we think the Man of the Match award should go to Margie, for touching the ball at least once and looking so pretty. Mark Harrison and Charles got lots of goals, Peter Muir didn't get any, but then neither did several others. Des defended magnificently the goalies did the right thing usually, Peter, John? Dave and Martin looked good in attack, and Graham looked very brown and Val was also playing. (We do apologise for missing the drinks story afterwards, but felt obliged to get this little report in the current issue).

***Lute playing Wendy of Museum fame is rumoured to be playing at the Albert Hall on June 10th.

***Crane stopped play at N.F.W. over the weekend: the site offices, scene of so many famous tea breaks, were evacuated 'neath the demo gang's hail of hard core. (Who forgot the keys and made us climb in through the window?) The Triangle now proudly owns a brand new site hutch, although we're not allowed to change therein. Our spoil heap grows even faster now we're not keeping oyster shells anymore, and a gold ring was found. (Well, nearly gold). The B.B.C. didn't film us on Wednesday, and our calvinist is wearing a box 'cos it's the cricket season.

***Somebody thought a poetry competition would be a nice idea, so, for 20p, how about: "There was a young Digger from Streatham,....."

***Things are looking really good at Trig: even the spoil heap (3 tons a day) has a certain je ne sais quoi. Dave & Ivan returned from the Beatrix Pottery region, where they found a La Tene III burial, some delicious frogslegs not to mention women, and lots of neolithic being thrown away, cos thats the way the French like to dig. Graham and Peter M. were heard to sing "My Old Mans A Dustman" and Christine decided to leave.

***All those who missed Margies party last Saturday also missed a long walk from the station, many slices of excellent barn brack, and a jolly good time.

***If you want cheap booze, you need Marc G. at the Museum.

***ERRATA: please amend your W.W.4's to read: Futuristic; polyethelyene Glycol; Al Bowlly and a floating praefectoral brothel. You know it makes sense.

***The Corporation Grass Cutters were doing there duty 'tother day on the ~~Unit~~ Noble Street site: one wonders if the Unit will ever get around to doing theirs by backfilling those December trenches.

***Mr. P. Taylor is still trying to buy an industrial sewing machine, presumably to ~~help~~ help him "run up his own trousers...." Actually, he's been cracking a few jokes recently: try these for size:-

i) Overheard at the Battle of Hastings, ~~the~~ the following song; "I'm dancing with spears in my eyes.."

ii) When Davy Jones goes to dig in Mexico: Labourer "Please sir, can I go to the toilet?" Davy Jones "Yes you MAYA, but be back INCA second..."

iii) "Please pray for me, that I may reach maturity by the end of the week."

iv) On spotting Peter-Boats-Marsden: "Long time no sea..."

v) "I say! Old archaeologists never die, they just go to pot."

GRIMES FAIRY TALES

Based on an idea by Master Paul Herbert, we bring you the touching story of:-

CINDERTAYLOR

Once upon a time in London Town (well, Streatham actually) there lived a little boy called Cindertaylor. His stepmother, who was very very wicked, and his three stepsisters- who wre very very ugly as well- were all archaeologists and would often take him down to the site, but they'd never let him dig, oh no: all he ever did was wash the pot, start the crane and collect the dumpy. Poor Cinders worked very hard indeed, scrubbing all traces of decoration of the ~~patxx~~ pottery and wallplaster, but he did SO much want to dig. Then it happened: A proclamation was issued in the W.W. that the dashing Sir Waterboard Mealer had just discovered a Bell Barrow, and wanted somebody to help him excavate it, applicants to present themselves at the Barrow forthwith.

"I say" said Cinders, "just think of that flexed corpse, not to mention all those battle axes and bronze daggers, and just imagine digging for Sir Waterboard.." "We are dear, we are!" snapped the ugliest of his sisters, "In fact we're on our way right now, but you can't go, 'cos you haven't finished all the pot from 208" "Or returned the drawing frame to Mandrax Graffiti" said another "Or swept all the goddam baulks" ~~xxxx xxxxxx~~ added the third. With that, they chuckled evilly, stuck their trowels in the back pocket of their jeans just as Dr. Coles said, and departed.

Cinders sat there and cried, and cried. He'd never finish the pot in time to see R.E.W. Mealer- not even a hot bath and a good woman could cheer him up now, Tearfully, he sat through Stars on Sunday and an action replay of the epilogue, and no sooner had he said "It's insane really" for the/ 30th time than there was an enormous flash, and who do you think was standing there? Why, his Fairy Hobmother of course! "I say" said our startled hero, "are you one of my spiritual experiences?" "No pet, I'm your Fairy Hobmother aren't I! Come to save my little digger in distress haven't I!" "How extraordinary" ejaculated the other, brightening visibly. His benefactor continued: "I've heard all about your problems, and I've come to tell you the're all over! Cindertaylor, you shall go to the Bell!" "I say, thats incredible- I promise I'll never go to one of htose film shows again or buy too many of those horrible books, but what can I wear? I took me suit back to Marks and Sparks and.."

"Say no more dear, say no more! One wave of me Magic WES and you'll be a joy forever!" She was as good as her word; one flash of the trowel and Cinders was suddenly arrayed in Lon.Mus. yellow waterproofs, an elegantly unmatched pair of Lon.Mus. W.Es, and a pretty little blue helmet, which even if a brick did smash it, at least he'd be insured. He was so pleased with his new outfit that he hardly heard his Fairy Hobmother's warning that ~~xxxxxx~~ he must be back at work by 9.00 o'clock sharp, or he'd be turned into an unpaid volunteer.

Never had there been a more grateful or more happy digger than young Cinders as he tripped gayily out into the balmy evening air. "They call me Mellow Yellow" he sang everjoyed with his new attire, until he reached the barrow. There, not five yards away, stood Sir Waterboard Mealer, who spotted our hero immediately. "My my," he declared, eyeing him up and down in his kindly way, "What big boots you've got!" "All the better to kick you with" replied Cinders, getting his Fairy Stories quite muddled up, and proceeded to do the startled Sir M. in.

And there I'm afraid we must leave the happy couple for the moment: I don't think Cindertaylor will get the job though, do you?

The Breakfast Serial will be back next week, with another all action episode of the TALES OF BEATRIX POTTERY

We want you to enjoy your W.W. in perfect condition- if you have any complaints contributions or libel, please send them to this address; Gustav c/o Whispering Heights, 10 Offord Rd, London N.1.
