

TACS Gazetteer News

July 1998

Issue 1

Welcome to the first issue of TACS Gazetteer News!

In which the Gazetteer Editor will attempt to keep you up to date with the latest news on the Gazetteer project, from newly discovered sites to progress on funding and publication. This occasional news sheet is aimed at all those TACS members who have volunteered their services to look for new tiled sites and check out existing information. I hope it will provide a little feedback for all your efforts - and for some excellent news on the funding front, see the leading article.

Current preoccupations of the Gaz. Ed. include putting together a detailed list of the whereabouts of tile and terracotta manufacturers' archives, and planning and prioritising site research visits, ready for getting out on the road in the autumn. Meanwhile, notebooks out for the summer holidays.....

Lynn Pearson, Gazetteer Editor

TACS Gazetteer News is published by the Tiles and Architectural Ceramics Society. Comments on content, and site information, may be addressed to the Gazetteer Editor at
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University of Wolverhampton agree to fund research for the Gazetteer project

After our initial success with obtaining a grant from the Manifold Trust, it was beginning to look like a long, hard road ahead for the project's funding - until, that is, the University of Wolverhampton's School of Art and Design decided to award the project £24,000 over a three-year period to support a part-time post-doctoral fellowship. This will allow the Gazetteer Editor to undertake research for the project and eventually write the Gazetteer itself - so now the project is a reality! There is still a need for fundraising to support the travelling and other expenses

Missing porkers found at Seaham?

Well, maybe not the Tamworth Two, but certainly four splendid specimens, discovered lurking in the shopping precinct of Seaham Harbour in County Durham. Sadly, they are under threat, as their butcher's shop has already closed - but they are just the type of site which needs bringing to the attention of the Gazetteer. We initially asked that you should collect information about sites, but not send it



in - however, now is the time. Pending construction of the database, we have decided that for the present, it would be simplest to collect site information in the original location index card format (just call or write for more if you have run out) - or, if you prefer, simply type out (or write, but typing can be scanned in and results in fewer errors) all your available information, and send it in to the address on the left. Of course, if you want to send your information on disk, or even by e-mail, we have the technology! But I am delighted to receive site details in any form - photographs too, provided they are just 'snaps', nothing valuable!

- ◆ Site information can include some or all (where possible!) of the following: building date, site description, address, tile manufacturer and designer, and building architect.
- ◆ But don't worry if you only have a few details - send the information anyway, it can always be checked out later.

What site information do we need for the

The obvious answer to 'What information do we need?' is 'As much as possible' - but this can range from 'I saw a tiled shop-front as we drove through Norton' to a three page essay detailing every tile in a huge scheme. Not surprisingly, responses tend to the former rather than the latter. But where possible, headings to aim at are as follows: address, type of location (eg church, school),

local authority, description of tiling, manufacturer, architect of building, date of building, source of information (eg visit, reference), date visited, and archive records (if available).

An accurate address is vital, along with a decent description, and any additional information, for example the telephone number of the building's manager. Information can be sent to the Gazetteer on Location Index cards, or on

plain paper - but typed (or word processed) information is a lot easier to read than handwriting, and results in fewer errors of transcription, as it can be scanned in. And of course there's always disk or e-mail (see address overleaf).

And photographs are appreciated, but please do not send anything valuable, just quick snaps to enable us to get an idea of how the tiles look. All quite simple really.....

A FISHY DISH

Keeping track of modern tiled sites is just as important - not to mention just as difficult - as discovering further historic sites and checking up on already-known sites. This heavily sculpted fishy panel (right) at Leicester Fish Market is a good example. It was installed around the end of 1997 and was made by Louise Skinner of De Montfort University, who taught fellow-students the art of

tile making as part of her finals. Its colours range from the blue of the sea at top and bottom, through greens and yellows to the eye-catching bright red of crab and lobster. 32 tiles in all make up the panel, which is well worth a visit, albeit sited very far away from the crowds in an obscure corner of the market.



MIDAS is the acronym for Manual and Data Standard for Monument Inventories, which has been compiled by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England to establish the best practice for databases concerned with,

MIDAS and the TACS Location

amongst other things, archaeology and architecture. TACS has been involved with the development of MIDAS, reviewing an early version of the scheme, and we hope to construct our computerised location index to be consistent with MIDAS principles,

exchange of information between databases easier. But designing a database is not a quick process - early mistakes are hard to rectify - so we are going slowly. Thus the decision to ask for site information in the old format