

TACS Gazetteer News

April 1999

Issue 2

**You never
thought it
would
happen - but
here's Issue
2!**

The Gazetteer Editor is happy to bring you - at last - Issue 2 of Gazetteer News. And news is one thing there has been no shortage of in the world of Gazetteer project funding. In Issue 1, I reported on the decision of the University of Wolverhampton to award the project funding for a post-doctoral research fellowship, for the Editor to undertake research and writing of the Gazetteer. Due to a series of minor administrative delays, (which doubtless bedevil all such projects), funding finally began on the 1st March 1999, leaving us slightly behind schedule but still very happy to be supported by the School of Art & Design at Wolverhampton.

Of course we still have much fundraising to do, especially for year three of the project, so for some more good news on that

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Gazetteer awarded Cumming Ceramic Research Foundation Scholarship

Everyone connected with the Gazetteer was delighted to hear in February that the Editor, in her project role, had been awarded the 1999 Cumming Ceramic Research Foundation Scholarship, in fact a sum of £800. Our application was to support a research proposal on 'Minton Tiles in the Churches of Staffordshire'. Many of you will remember the list of Staffordshire churches to which Herbert Minton donated tiles, as reprinted in *Glazed Expressions* 32 (Spring 1996). The research envisaged will follow up the fate of these tiles - an exercise never previously attempted - photograph them and investigate their design. Comparisons will also be made with tiles in the county's other churches. The results from this project will feed directly into the Gazetteer, as well as standing alone as a separate entity, and it is hoped that in due course a report will appear in print, perhaps in

Seventy new sites for Gazetteer in just two months!

And one of them is pictured to the right, the Old Parr's Head public house in Islington's notoriously trendy Upper Street, visited on a TACS event in mid-April. The pub,



which has a fine brown faience facade complete with lettering advertising the brewery, London firm Barclay Perkins, does not feature in Pevsner - nor is it a listed building, and nor does it register with the various sources one might consult for pubs and/or London. It was found as a spin-off of a TACS event - the tried and trusted (though rather slow!) method of research by wandering about, as the Events-Sec-cum-Gaz-Ed did the legwork for the Camden and Islington walk. It is one of seventy new sites which have been added to the Gazetteer during February and March, the main source being information provided by members. As the project is now properly funded, there has been the opportunity to make the site details available in database format, which will eventually allow easy listing of details by town,

A passion for beer

Which is perhaps putting it a bit strongly, but an interest in pubs, beer and the brewing industry as a whole has led the Gaz Editor to make several ceramic site finds - the one pictured right courtesy of the beer magazine *The Taste*. It shows the Marble Arch Inn, Rochdale Road, Collyhurst, just north of



Manchester city centre. It was built in 1888, but until recently its magnificent interior had remained unseen, hidden away behind plasterboarding. The interior is finished completely in glazed brick and tiles, the frieze shown continuing around the room and reading variously 'brandies', 'rum', 'porter' and so on. There is also a complete mosaic floor with an intricate floral pattern. Any reports from members on this pub - manufacturers, details etc - would be very helpful, as I have yet to see it for myself. (For those interested in the drinking side of research, it now houses its own brewery.)

It's clear that the connections between ceramics firms and the brewing industry are strong, but thus far there has been little written on the subject, apart from in relation to pubs themselves. I am hoping to put that right towards the end of this year, with a conference paper on the subject, which will take in everything from ceramic kiln tiles (used in malting) through pub design to the use of ceramics in breweries - there were some wonderfully decorative glazed brick interiors, and much terracotta used to enliven brewery facades, along with entire ceramic facades, for example the Doulton facade of Ansell's in Birmingham, erected between the wars.



Does this room still exist?

It is the Moorish smoking room at Rhinefield, Hampshire, designed by Romaine-Walker in c1888. It appears in Mark Girouard's *The Victorian Country House*, published in 1972. Rhinefield - a country house rather than a place - features in Pevsner, but the survival (or otherwise) of this wonderful room is unclear. Anyone who has visited the circus at Blackpool Tower will instantly see the similarities! I'm sure this should be an easy problem to solve - any

UPCOMING CALL FOR INFORMATION

Now we have substantial funding for the Gazetteer project, I shall soon be contacting volunteers individually about their specific counties (or other areas they may be looking after). The text of the Gazetteer - about a quarter of a million words, with maybe 300 b/w photographs and a large colour section - will be written county by county, so the Editor will need to ask members to check old site references, look at new leads, and possibly even do a little research on sources. During the recent London event, one of our location index cards was found to be rather out of date - the Unity Church in Upper Street, dating from 1862 according to its card, a *Builder* reference - was found to have been completely rebuilt in the 1960s!