

Often we divide into two groups: one group walks the City Walls, exploring the formal boundaries of Southampton in the medieval period (considerable suburbs spread to the North and East of the City). The children observe and record their evidence by drawing and writing. They see clearly the line of the old port, new reclaimed land and the limestone structure of the town walls, which had to be constantly guarded against seaborne invading forces. On the town walls the children can see for themselves how tide levels have made their mark. The children begin to understand why it was necessary in medieval times to have walls around the old town and portcullises set at the entrances and exits. By sketching parts of the walls and towers of medieval Southampton the children begin to realise the size of present day Southampton and so compare it to the size of a medieval city.

The Town Guides introduce a bit of fun by telling tales of old Southampton (including ghost stories). They are also told the true story of John Fortin who lived in 58 French Street in 1338 when there was a French invasion. Meanwhile the Museums' staff are working with the children on trade in medieval Southampton, by using discussion and our own worksheets and drawings. Some of the worksheets prepared by Museums' staff look at lives of medieval builders, merchants, housewives, potters and blacksmiths.

The Exhibition set up in God's House Tower Museum of Archaeology has middle school children in mind. It is clear in its presentation and has two models both at work — a merchant at his desk and



Paul Carter, Viewpoint

a woman in her kitchen! There is also a model showing the Merchant's House under construction, and through using the worksheet on the medieval builder children can explore more closely and see how the house was built, what materials were used and the sizes of the rooms in relation to each other and also compare these to room sizes in their own homes.

Our plan of medieval Southampton (based on one drawn by John Speed in the 16th Century) gives children a notion of where people lived and worked, and emphasises the idea that families — whatever their trade — often worked at home and sold their goods in front of their house, and stored their wares in undercrofts. Under medieval Southampton, especially by the port area, the ground is honeycombed by a system of underground cellars (undercrofts) often with vaulted ceilings.

The Museums have a small handling collection, containing pottery, daub (as in wattle and daub), a medieval tile, a fish oil lamp, animal and fish bones and oyster shells. Through handling we explore the evidence we have found for life from

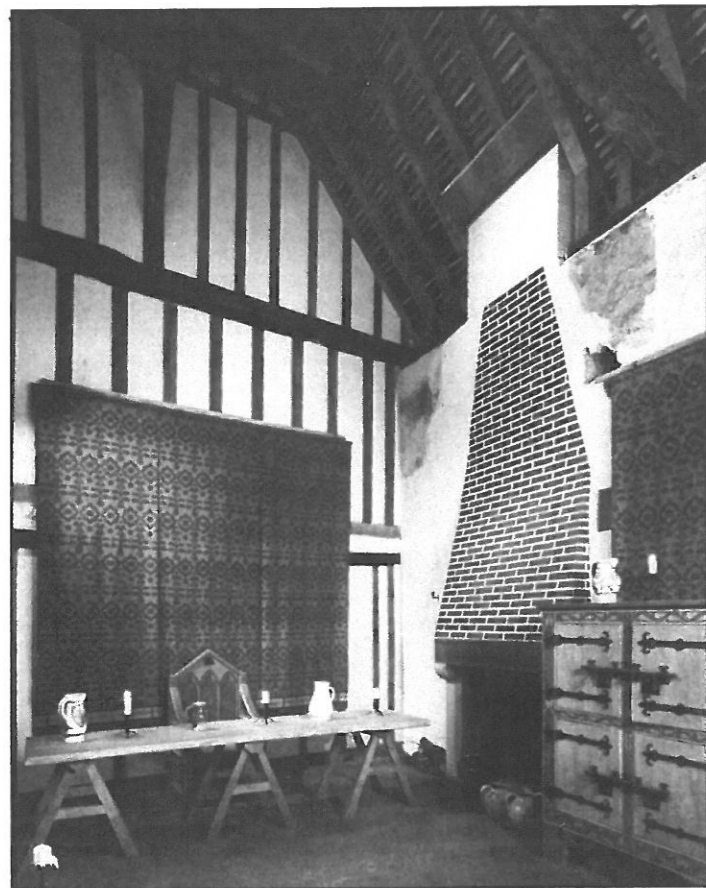
rubbish pits — which children love to hear about, with appropriate language.

Now is the time to visit the Merchant's House itself. This puts the housewives, the merchant's work, the building construction and the French pottery all into context. The children do close observational drawings, using large boards, charcoal pencils and pastels. All that has been learnt in language, exchange of ideas and seeing the artefacts — gives life to the house they are now in.

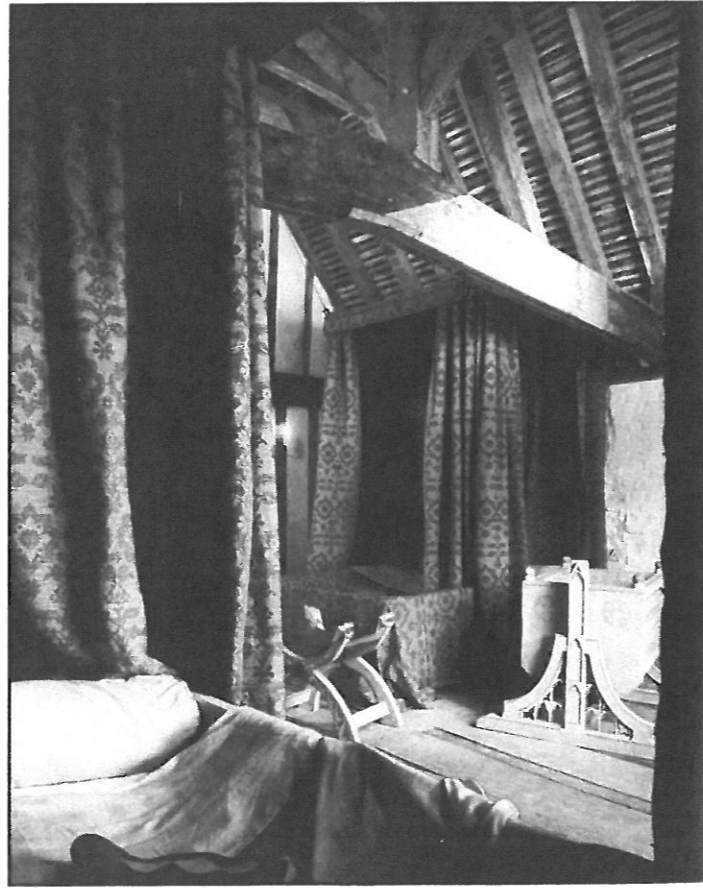
Immediately the children start to jump up and down (gently!) on the beaten earth floor, this leads to discussion and thinking about different floor coverings. We have had children who have stayed with grannies in India, who live in a house with an earth floor.

The house is clearly a subject for a 'Houses and Homes' theme, an external project for younger and middle school children. John Fortin's house has a strength in its content and structure of natural materials; wooden timbers, stone, plaster and earth. The power, simplicity and strength of the reconstructed furniture (which has been painted with natural dyes showing merchants in their cogs and jousting scenes) lead the children to draw strong, simple drawings. However, it is impossible to work for very long in the House in the winter, because there is no heating at all — except at the Custodian's desk! This needs to be thought about — it would be difficult though — not only is it a timber framed building; it is also situated (nowadays) in a smokeless zone!

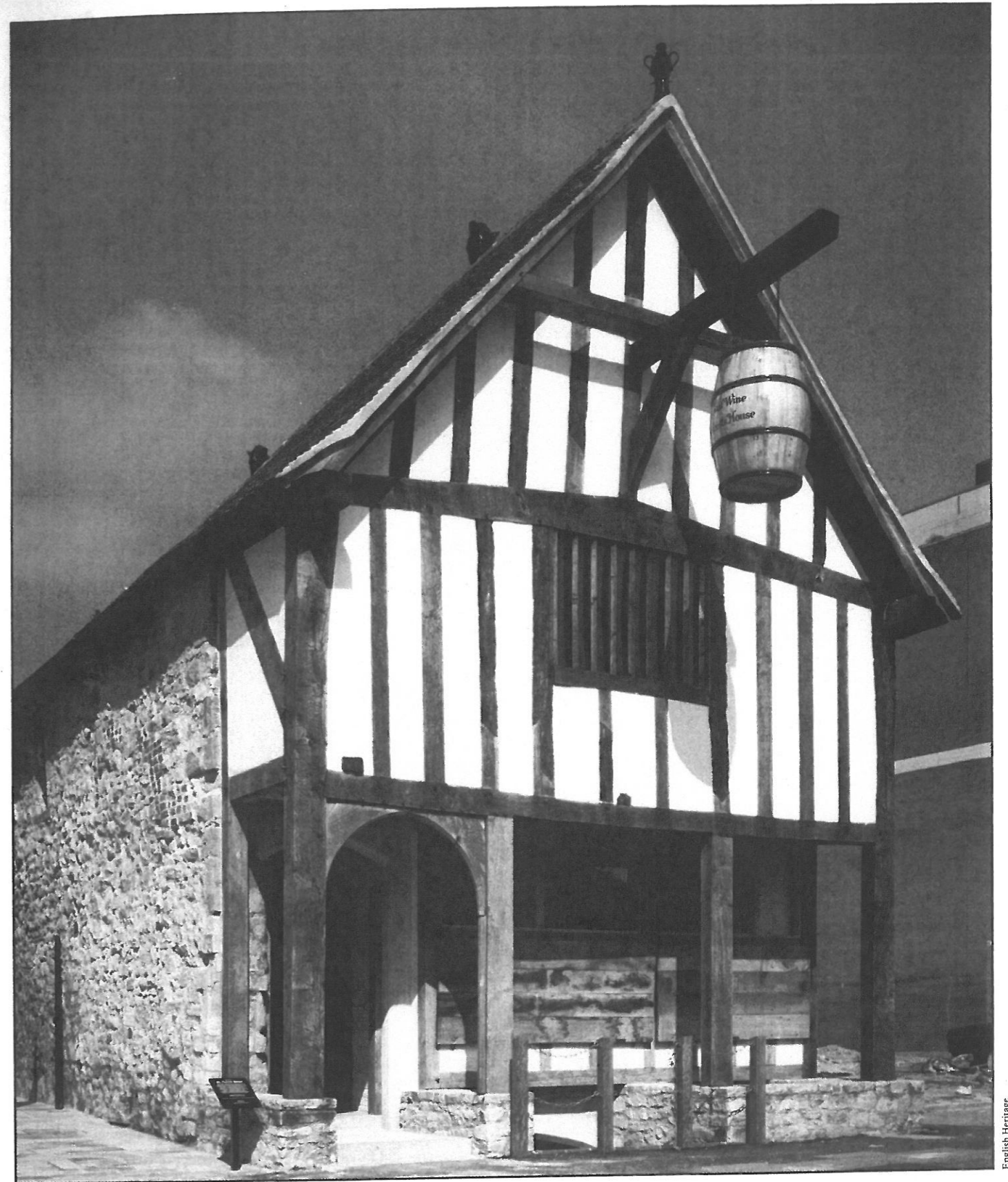
At present there is no Education Centre, so educational work takes place throughout the house. Work could be done



Medieval Merchant's House: replica furniture and furnishings help to recreate the interior as it might have been between the mid 13th and 14th centuries.



Medieval Merchant's House: the task of rebuilding and refurnishing has taken four years.



English Heritage

on, furniture, textures of buildings, a comparison of names of rooms, for example; hall, chamber and bakehouse. We could consider a way of living where you live where you also have your shop and office. We often have in our school parties children of non-European backgrounds who live behind or above 'the shop'. We could make mathematical use of the house by measuring the inside and the outside, and making an architect's plan. In the meantime we employ freelance experts to give workshops on medieval music

making and spinning wool — since wool was the source of Southampton's wealth at that time. I can see that herb/medicine workshops would succeed at the medieval Merchant's House as well.

It is essential to bring this house to life. The staff of the Southampton City Museums' Education Service have taken the first step.

Hazel Beuret  
Southampton Museums' Education Assistant

Medieval Merchant's House, Southampton.

Medieval Merchant's House,  
59 French St, Southampton, 4m S of  
city centre just off Castle Way.  
OS Map 196; ref SU 419112.  
Tel 0892 548166 to book a free visit.



# Using archaeological sites and museums with educational groups

Museum education staff from Tyne & Wear and Scunthorpe outline ideas and projects for using the remains of Roman forts and the objects recovered from them.



High Farm Middle School at the fort

Wallsend and South Shields are approximately 4 miles apart on opposite sides of the River Tyne. In Roman times there were forts at both sites. The fort at South Shields guarded the entrance to the Tyne, and later functioned as a supply base for campaigns into Scotland. Wallsend fort guarded the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall. Both sites are now open to the public and at each site there is a small museum immediately adjacent to the fort housing excavated material, reconstructions, models, drawings and photographs. At Wallsend Roman Fort, only the headquarters building and the foundations of the east gate are on display while the rest of the 4½ acres of the fort is covered by turf, though the outline of the fort wall, gates and four of the barrack blocks are marked by modern paving. The Roman fort at South Shields provides a strong contrast. A significant number of the buildings are excavated and on display, excavation takes place on the site all year round, and there is a full-size reconstruction of one of the fort gateways. This contains a number of reconstructed scenes of Roman life. It provides an excellent opportunity to see the sort of finds displayed in the museum in an 'authentic' Roman setting.

Education staff at both Roman forts have worked with visiting school groups to develop the links between the site and the museum so that the maximum amount of

information can be derived from both. Whether the site or the museum is visited first must depend on the preference of the teachers and their knowledge of the group. It may be important to start thinking about the buildings inside the fort before going onto the site. Students can be encouraged to consider what sort of buildings would be necessary inside a fort. This work can be developed inside the museum by asking students to find objects which they think would have been associated with particular types of buildings and also to suggest what types of objects might also have been found in these buildings and are not on display in the museum.

The first task on a site must be for the students to orient themselves. This can be done using A4 sized plans of the fort and the exercise can either be achieved by relating the plans to the buildings marked on the ground or by using a small magnetic compass. To give themselves extra fixed points the students can mark on their plans the directions of landmarks outside the fort.

At Wallsend, because most of the buildings cannot be seen on the ground, students work from the large scale model of the fort inside the museum to fill in the missing buildings on the plan. They can then go back to the site and working in groups lay out approximately where the buildings were on the site — the orange tape used for roadworks is ideal for this.

Alternatively older students can measure the locations of the buildings from large scale excavation plans in the museum and then lay the buildings out accurately on the site.

An appreciation of the actual size of the buildings can also be gained by measuring those buildings where the plan can be traced on the ground. A variety of measuring techniques can be used. The turrets around the fort wall, for example, are marked out with 14cm square cobbles, so these can be counted for a measurement. Larger buildings can be measured by pacing (using a Roman pace — two steps not one), or by using a tape or a trundle wheel. The measurements are recorded and the size of the building can then be compared with, for example, a classroom, or the school hall. As well as the simple measurement of lengths it is appropriate to consider area. This may not need to be an arithmetically calculated area but it is important to work out how many people could have lived/eaten/worked/slept in a particular building. With a group these sort of rough calculations can be made by assessing how many people 'fit' into a particular area and then making a guess as to how much extra space would be needed.

The models of the forts provide a very important way of examining the relative size of the buildings. They also provide an opportunity to get an idea of what the buildings actually looked like in three dimensions. A lot of work can be centred around the models — they are particularly suitable for drawing exercises, enlarging the buildings to fill a sheet of paper, for example. They can also be used for exercises of the nature of — 'Describe what you would see on a walk from the hospital to the east gate'; thus testing powers of observation and imagination. Having described the walk from the model the student can then actually take the walk on the ground, for example timing how long it takes.

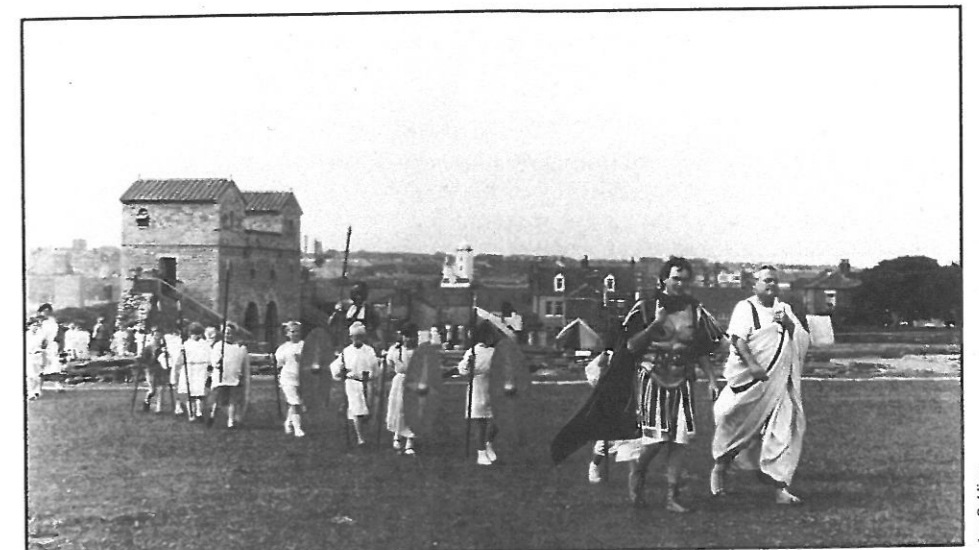
While museums are about objects, excavated sites are fundamentally about structures and buildings. Students can be encouraged to build up 'pictures' of how particular objects relate to particular buildings. At its simplest level this can be a sort of 'Cluedo' exercise — 'the Commanding Officer, in the Headquarters Building, with the altar to Jupiter'. At a more sophisticated level, students can construct assemblages of objects to fit into particular buildings. Another similar exercise involves trying to work out how many buildings a particular object might have been found in at different times. A buckle, for example, worn by a soldier living in the barracks and taken with him into the hospital when he had to have an arrow removed from his leg after a battle.

In addition to the museum displays which can be seen by any visitor, special facilities are made available to school groups. The most important of these is the use of a classroom area with a handling collection of Roman pottery. This gives students a chance to actually make contact with genuine Roman objects. They can be encouraged to look carefully at the pottery, to feel it, to sniff it, to see how it was made, to work out what it might have been used for, to draw what it might have looked like when it was whole. The pottery that is used for this exercise at Wallsend all came from a particular area of the fort. It was found in a 'blind alley' between two barrack blocks. Students can actually visit the part of the site where it was found and imagine what it was like in Roman times.

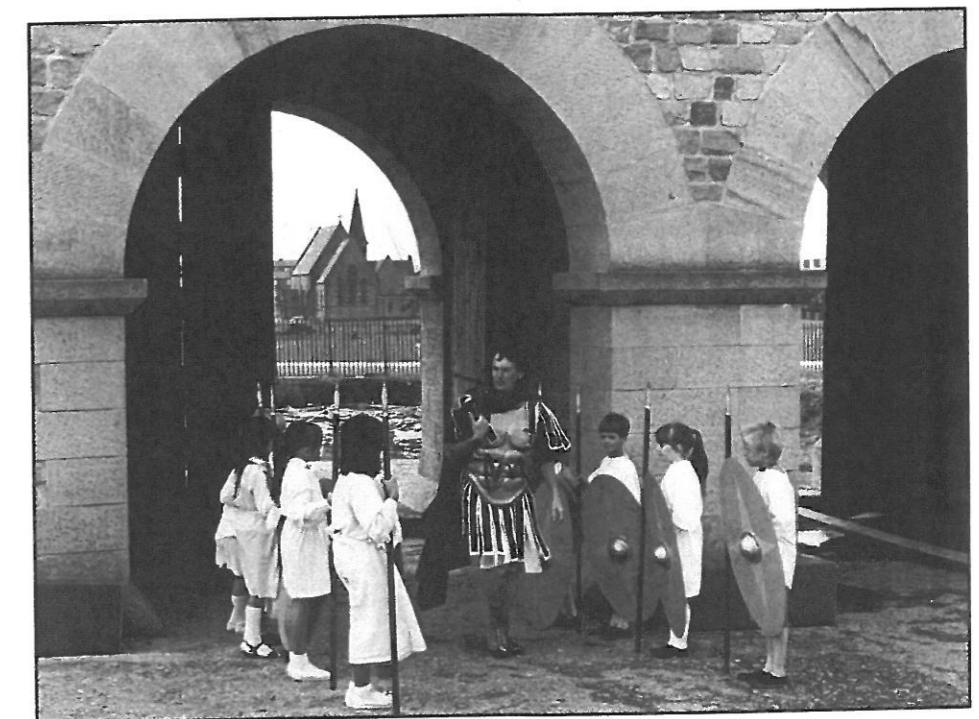
Both museums contain information about the excavation of the sites, including plans, sections and photographs which the archaeologists used to record the site. At Wallsend, where there are no excavations going on activities can be set up to demonstrate the process of excavation. Layers of sand and soil are arranged in a fish tank to represent layers in the ground. Pieces of broken crockery are incorporated in one of the layers. A small group of students can then carefully remove the layers one at a time, remove the broken crockery and glue it together (using an impact adhesive such as UHU) to reconstruct a cup or plate.

At South Shields the education officer has taken visiting groups on 'Guided Discovery' tours of the site. This discovery is focussed on a particular theme, for example, 'How we know', 'The Nature of the Evidence', 'Life of a soldier'. In using the evidence presented in the museum to interpret the fort, students were encouraged to ask themselves questions, to develop observational skills and to draw on existing knowledge from school or earlier in the visit. During a visit students climbed out of imaginary ditches, and walked through invisible walls, doorways and arches, recreating on site buildings seen previously as models in the museum. Visiting the gatehouse may well represent the culmination of a site visit — students can be encouraged to use their own imaginations to visualise scenes before being taken to see someone else's reconstruction.

One successful way of linking site and museum has been for a member of the education staff to meet a school group in the role of a Roman. The role of Lucius, a Roman auxiliary soldier of about 200 AD, has been created. Lucius takes the group around the gallery pointing out items that he, or his Roman friends, used, and telling stories about the items. This is an excellent way of linking the site and the museum objects because it provides a personal context for the objects. Items which are purely personal, for example a piece of jewellery, are always interesting to children and they can imagine what sort of person might have worn this brooch 1700 years ago, perhaps giving them a name and writing about what this person felt like wearing the brooch.



The fort commander and the Emperor Severus accompanied by the guard of honour. Living History Project South Shields Roman Fort, July 1988.



The fort commander inspects the troops. Living History Project, South Shields Roman Fort, July 1988.

The most complete attempt to integrate site and museum and the information provided by each, was the living history project at South Shields in summer 1988. Schools were asked to visit the museum before participating in the project and to use the visit to find out about various aspects of Roman life. Information packs were also prepared and sent out to schools. This information would be used to reconstruct a day in the life of a Roman soldier. The project was run by Museums Service staff with help from local teachers, student teachers and a sixth form volunteer. Over a period of 2 weeks, 500 children each spent a day preparing for the arrival of the Emperor Septimius Severus in 208 AD to inspect his new supply base for the campaigns into Scotland. The students had the role of new recruits to the Roman army and took part in four out of nine activities (cooking, herbal preparations, weaving, metalwork, woodwork, mosaic making, building,

weapons training, pottery making). These activities were based directly on evidence from the excavations. For example the heddles used for braid weaving were copied from an excavated example, and the building work represented the new granaries being constructed for Severus.

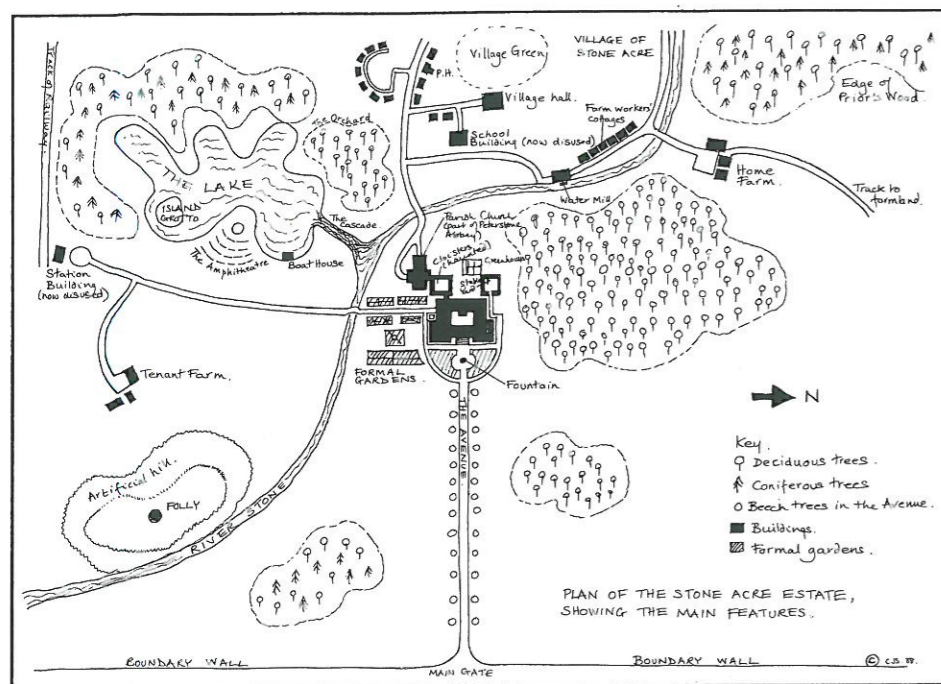
The techniques described above have been used to provide links between site and museum at two very different Roman fort sites. It is very important that students visiting a site do make this link since neither the structures on the site nor the artefacts in the museum can successfully be considered in isolation from each other and the evidence from both must be integrated if the student is to develop any real idea of life in past times.

Iain Watson, Tyne & Wear Museums Service  
Neil Jacques, Scunthorpe Museum (formerly Tyne & Wear Museums Service)



# Stone Acre Enterprise

Stone Acre Enterprise is an interesting activity designed by teachers. Students worked in 'companies' to form business plans and marketing ideas for an historic country house and its estate.



Part of the Information Package given to each Company.

We had held successful 'Enterprise' days before at Rosebery School, Epsom, so we had experience on which to draw when we began to plan Stone Acre. Previously one day had been organised towards the end of the school year for a year group. 3rd, 5th and 6th year girls had taken part. Girls were divided into companies and given a brief to design, manufacture and market a product for a specific clientele. Experts in various fields were invited into school to give advice and to judge the results.

'Stone Acre' originated as an activity for all 3rd year pupils in their History lessons for the last four weeks of term. The girls organised themselves into companies of five or six, each with a Managing Director, name and logo, within their History groups. Each company then received a letter from the fictitious Jane Barton who, due to unforeseen circumstances, had inherited the family estate, 'Stone Acre', along with a large Inheritance Tax demand. Ms Barton explained that she needed advice on how to raise money in order to pay the tax and maintain the estate. Her one stipulation was that no part of the estate could be sold as the family motto of 'Never Divide' stood firm. She went on to explain that she would adopt the business plan which appealed to her most. Each company also received a plan of the house and gardens, a map of Hampshire where the fictitious estate was situated and a family tree. Anne Burrows (History) and Christine Sharp (Art and Head of Year) invented the family and estate and devised a history for them spanning from Henry



The Final Countdown — girls were allowed to spend their History lessons setting up their exhibits in the School Hall.



VIII to the present. Sara Chippendale (Librarian) assisted with research. The house and estate were created according to the history they had invented and features were included to provide scope and stimulation for cross-curricular activity. Several Departments volunteered to undertake a series of lessons on a relevant aspect, e.g. Art, French, Home Economics, Mathematics and Religious Studies.

The 'companies' were given unlimited access to the Library, Resources Centre, IT Room and telephones. Wherever we



Samples of some of the displays, showing food for the restaurant and cafeteria; souvenirs and guide books, including some in French, and a possible logo for the Stone Acre products.



Prizewinners and runners-up spent an afternoon in September at Kensington Palace, where Michelle Roebuck experienced the constraints of a typical Victorian court dress, much to the delight of other visitors.

went in the school during the following month we saw and heard girls talking about 'Stone Acre'. As the weeks passed it became obvious that girls were spending a great deal of their own time on the project. They were contacting outside agencies such as banks and catering firms and enlisting the help of parents and older brothers and sisters.

Whilst the companies were busy formulating their business proposals the School Librarian was busy contacting English Heritage, who suggested the Education Officer for the Royal Palaces, Rosie Barker, to visit the school and make the final judging.



Rosie Barker with the prizewinning company and two of the staff who were involved in planning the Enterprise.

The final week dawned. Companies were allowed time out of History lessons to display their proposals on the walls and tables in the Hall. Each of the 24 companies was allocated an equal amount of space. Preliminary judging took place, involving teachers, including Anne Burrows, Christine Sharp and Sara Chippendale, 'old girls' and Neil Chippendale, the local historian at Hounslow Library: a shortlist of eight was then decided. After carefully examining all the entries and discussing the chosen shortlist, Rosie talked to the girls gathered in the hall about all of the entries and announced the eight shortlisted companies. The representative of each of these companies was invited to answer questions about their proposals. Rosie then retired to the Library to make her final decision before announcing the names of the Commended, Highly Commended and Winning companies. The prize was an afternoon visit to Kensington Palace. We met Rosie Barker there and she showed us round the Palace and grounds and two girls had the opportunity to experience court dress.

We were very pleased with the project and the enthusiasm and hard work of the girls. Our only regret, with hindsight, is that several departments did not become involved as participation was voluntary. There was scope for every subject to contribute. If we embarked on a similar project again we would prefer to suspend the timetable for a shorter, more concentrated period of time.

Sara Chippendale and Christine Sharp Rosebery School, Epsom, Surrey.