

*Q: What is your recollection of the project?*

*A: It was, and still is, the highlight of my teaching career.*

*To me, the three key elements were:*

*- The simplicity of the aim, to answer two questions. Who lived there, and what happened to them? The children could use all their newly acquired skills and ways of working together to answer this aim.*

*- The chance to work with experts who made the subjects exciting and accessible to all. The children could draw directly and freely on the expertise of an archaeologist and the artist-in-residence.*

*- Finally, the children and the schools were encouraged always to work collaboratively, not competitively for the greater good of the project.*

*Q: What do you see as its long-term value (if any) for the children?*

*A: The project fired the children's imagination by straight away casting them into the role of archaeologists. The impact of the first visit to the site, where they made genuine discoveries for themselves was tremendous. From day one they were all hooked and enthralled by identifying and interpreting their own evidence. Importantly they learnt straight away to constantly question the evidence and to seek alternative views.*

*Q: Do you think the children have taken away any lasting impressions?*

*A: Three years on, in their last year of primary school, the group were asked to recall their impressions of their time at Bushfield. The consensus was that the year they did 'the Romans' was the best ever!*

*Q: Do you still apply lessons learnt during the project?*

*A: Yes, the spirit continues. I have retained many of the skills and techniques of an archaeologist in handling, recording and questioning objects, information and sites. Other teachers come to me for ideas on how to continue the approach. On visits to the site we are still able to recapture and repeat some of the initial excitement of discovery and recording work in role as archaeological detectives.*

*Q: Would you/could you do it again?*

*A: I'd love to - definitely a 'yes'. Sadly, I feel there would no longer be the time to devote six weeks to a project such as this. This is ironic since it is the perfect way to switch young children on to history and capture them for life.*

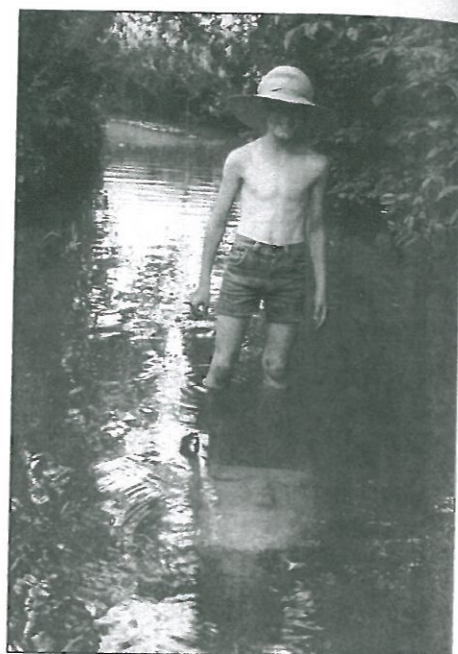
Marion Blockley  
Lecturer in Heritage Management,  
University of Birmingham, The  
Ironbridge Institute. Formerly  
Information Officer of the  
Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit.



ABOVE: Mourners at the mausoleum

RIGHT: Wheel symbol of the Celtic God Taranis

BELOW: The God Mercury and attendants



Marion Blockley

## Accentuate the positive...

Inspired by our 'Old and New' article in Remnants 18, Lowfields County Infant School in Lincoln took up the idea of setting up a museum in their own school.

This week heralds the end of another busy, stimulating and successful term at Lowfields Infant School. However, it feels quite different in many crucial respects. There is a feeling of elation and pride, a sense of achievement and worth, yet we have been led to believe there is little of this at present in schools or society generally.

In recent months much of the media coverage has just been bombarding us with negative attitudes and sweeping statements. Therefore, it occurred to me that it was time to redress the balance and start a new era in which we celebrate co-operation and share achievement.

In our own way we have managed to maintain the equilibrium by keeping hold of the positive in these depressing times. The wonderful museum envisaged, developed and used as a resource throughout the whole term, this week culminated in a fantastic exhibition open to visitors and has been our beacon in these dark times.

I was a new head to the school in September 1992. The two year cycle of topic/National Curriculum planning was half way through. I noticed that the topic identified for Spring Term 1993 was Down Your Way. Within this topic there were focuses on



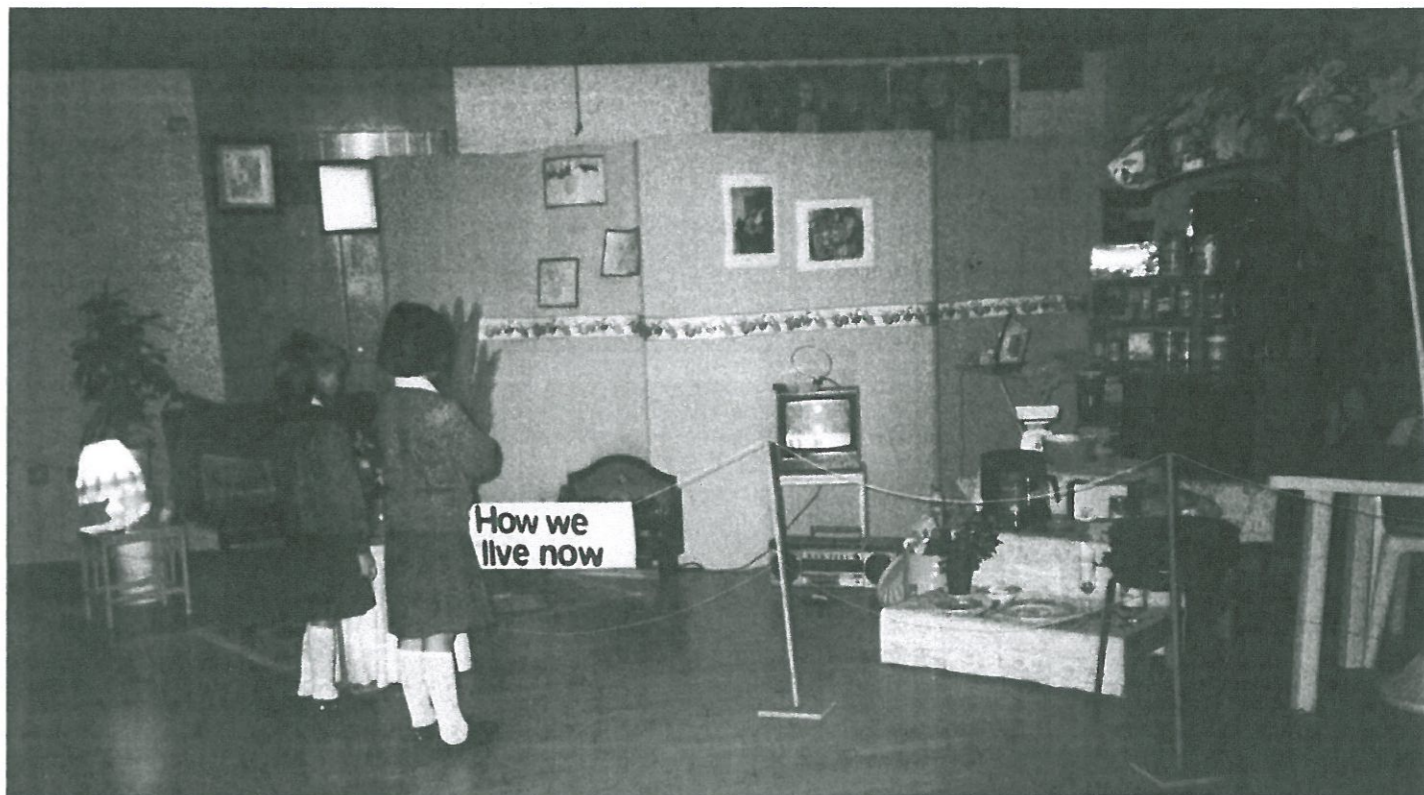
ABOVE & BELOW: Visitors to the museum.

Science - materials, Geography - study of local environment and History - artefacts and photographs.

Immediately I could see how all these things could come together in setting up a museum. However, more importantly I could see an early, clear chance of approaching and involving parents, governors, friends in the local community, museums in our historic city just two or three miles away, and

engendering a corporate feel amongst children and all staff. This involvement was something I believed in passionately and this opportunity too good a one to miss.

The history co-ordinator was as enthusiastic as me, so we started to plan when? where? who would be involved? how would we begin? The local newspapers were helpful in publishing a photograph of our



children using artefacts already in school and launching our campaign for offers of donations and loans on a long and short term basis. Letters went out to parents and the response was good. Everyone seemed to have something to offer from a button hook to an old commode!

Initially the items were logged and housed in a small room setting in displays arranged by one class and labelled by another and thank you letters sent out by another. In fact each class took on various jobs so that all had a vested interest and ownership. Classes visited the museum in large and small groups and made observational drawings, time lines, various comparisons and used role play to gain access to the History curriculum. Children were now readily and confidently moving between curriculum boundaries to express ideas stimulated by their visit to our school museum.

We decided to share this with all of those who had helped us to mount it. Therefore, invitations were sent to parents, children from junior school, friends (especially those who had donated items), inspectors and the media.

On Friday before the opening all staff stayed to mount the four main displays. The first was clothing, the second an old fashioned shop, the third an old fashioned house ('How we used to live') and the fourth as a comparison a modern house ('How we live now'). Childrens' work from the previous weeks was displayed alongside photographs, paintings and artefacts.

Visitors had been offered a choice of dates and times between 9.30 - 10.30am or 2.15 - 3.15pm in order to stagger the numbers. The museum attracted about fifty visitors each day and guides manned each display and the entrance. Pupils guided their own parents around and the guides took other visitors to view. Visitors were asked to sign and comment as they left and it was decided to ask for donations rather than stipulate an admission fee. Some elderly people were invited in at various times during the week to speak to groups of children.

The arrangement was to dismantle the exhibition on Friday afternoon and people were asked to collect their loans then. The staff still can't believe the relative ease with which this took place. The success was felt by everyone. The behaviour, respect and knowledge that the children displayed was noted by everyone. Everyone is still talking about it.

The study of items in the museum, the writing of invitations to guests, the role play as curator and other allied tasks proved the value of cross curriculum approaches especially, with young children readily switching between subject boundaries in their quest to put all of this into a meaningful context.

What pleasure was found and knowledge gained from children discussing their prized exhibit, relating its origins, family connections and the value of saving our heritage. Children, parents and teachers took on joint responsibility for caring for the exhibits and conducted themselves around the exhibition in an appropriate manner thus highlighting the importance of such joint ventures in education.

Instead of a weary school of staff, pupils and disenchanted parents dreading the next news bulletin, I am

proud to say I am working this week with highly motivated human beings in a positive, productive way to celebrate our educational and community achievements. At Lowfields perhaps we have found a new signature tune in the famous song:

*'We're gonna accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative....!'*

Ms B P Fox  
Headteacher  
Lowfields County Infant School, Lincoln



Lowfields County Infants School



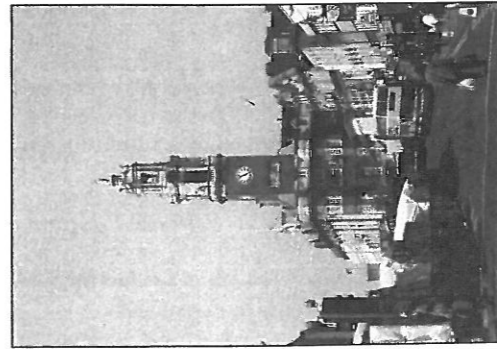
Lowfields County Infants School

ABOVE & BELOW: Visitors being shown round the museum.

## STREETWISE

### Buildings with Uniforms

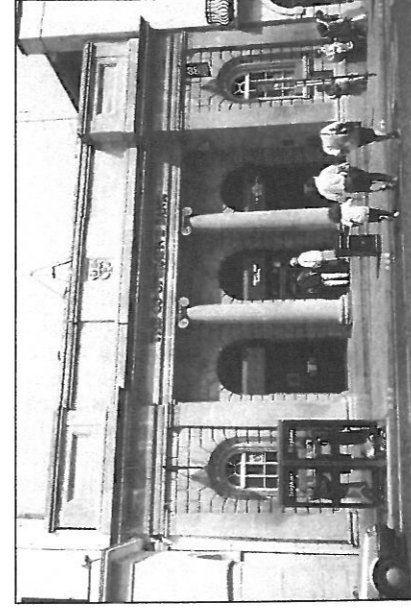
In almost all high streets you will find some buildings easy to recognise as soon as you see them - because they have their own particular uniforms! Here are some examples from Colchester in Essex.



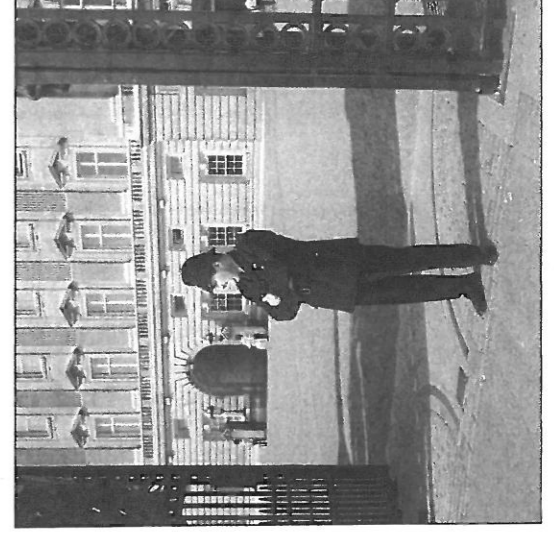
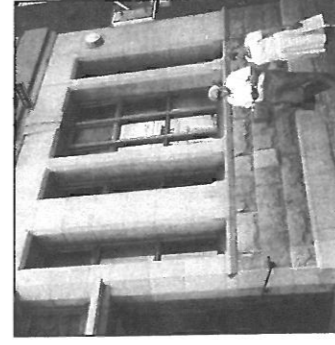
This town hall was built in 1902. You can see it really stands out in the town's high street. It is decorated with columns and statues - a building which says 'Look at me. How important I am'.



A human representative of the important face of the town hall is the commissioner - a sort of receptionist at the entrance. Look how imposing he is in his special uniform.

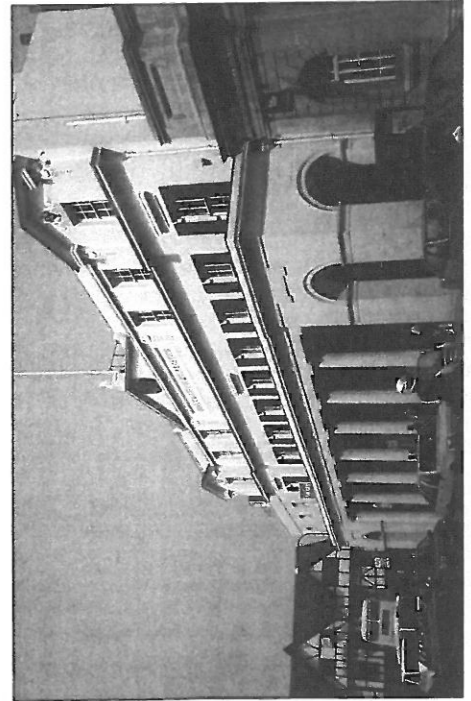


Banks want to appear absolutely solid and secure - a good place to deposit your money. This building was originally a Corn Exchange in 1844, then a technical school, an art gallery and a theatre! Recently the Co-operative Bank has bought the building. Look at the solid stone blocks used on another bank (right) in the same street.

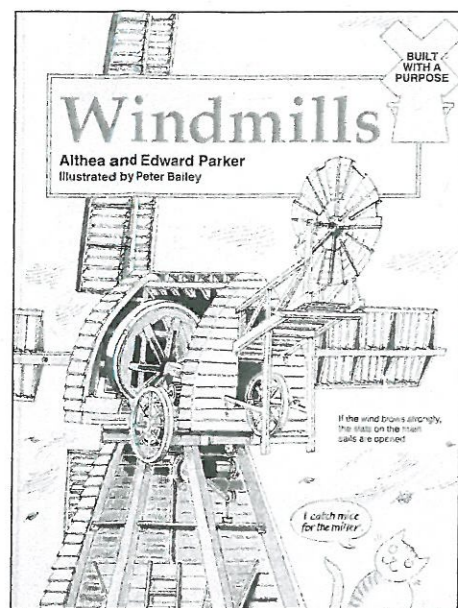


Like banks, the police need to give an appearance of security with what they are wearing - this one's outside Buckingham Palace.

This grand frontage, built in 1820, belonged to a company which also looked after people and their property - the Essex and Suffolk Insurance Company. The columns are made of cast iron.



Streetwise investigates clues to the past that can often be found in the streets near your school!



**Built with a Purpose: Windmills**  
Althea and Edward Parker  
A&C Black, 1992.  
ISBN 0-7136-3532-0  
£7.50

Most children are carted off by teachers or parents at some point in their school career to see a windmill in operation. And quite right, too, if not in the cause of peering into the past then at least to give an insight into an environmentally friendly form of power production. And yet the principles of harnessing windpower and using it in a directed way are not easy ones to grasp - we have all struggled and often given up on the diagrams tacked to the back of the mill door, craning the neck over 90° degrees to follow the power path of big vertical cogs driving little horizontal ones. Althea Parker's book takes away the neck strain by describing the process step by step, devoting double page spreads to each new technological cog. It also looks at the history and picture of windpower en route, taking in all its different uses and potential.

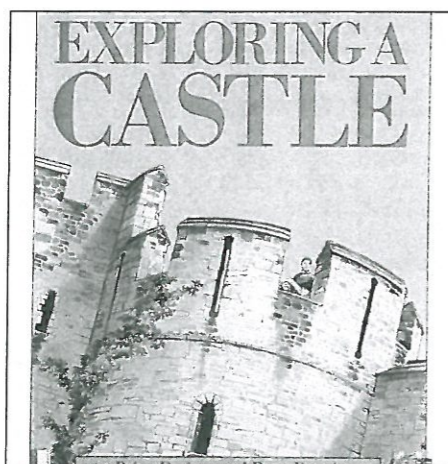
The text is straightforward and unpatronising. The authors don't back off from giving each part of the machinery its proper name, like windshaft, wallchart, or bolter. They are careful not to confuse with too much scientific terminology, but instead relate new concepts to ideas with which children are already familiar. For example, the governor, which prevents the millstones from grinding away at each other when the corn supply is limited, is named, but the centrifugal force which drives it is explained in picture form and an inset illustration of children on the swings of a fairground roundabout draws the familiar parallel.

To lighten the tone and give some diversion from the heady business of following the transference of power

from sail to stone, each page has a jokey reference to the history of milling or an example of the daft uses to which windpower has been put, like catapulting beehives at a besieged castle!

The text is good, but this almost rates as a picture book with lush, full colour illustrations on every page. These are a mixture of photographs and child-friendly, jolly but accurate drawings by Peter Bailey, with the addition of benign miller, sack-camping mice and complacent tabby. Despite the slightly whimsical presentation, the illustrations are models of clarity, and for hesitant readers provide all the information necessary for understanding how a windmill works.

Liz Hollinshead  
Regional Education Officer, Midlands  
English Heritage.



**Exploring a Castle**  
Brian Davison and Peter Dennis  
Kingfisher, 1992.  
ISBN 0-86272-960-2  
£3.99

This is a reformatted edition of the earlier Looking at a Castle in the Kingfisher 'Stepping Stones' series. The book is basically the same with a slightly modified text and a few alterations to illustrations. The author, Brian Davison, is one of English Heritage's leading experts on castles and he brings to the text the most up-to-date views on castle life and construction. It is a nice book, aimed at Key Stage 1 and should be a welcome sight for hard pressed teachers looking for good, suitable sources for young children. The text is simple - although a few words will need explanation - and successfully links to the illustrations to get children to look at a castle for evidence. As such it is a good stimulus for children before a visit. A good book and certainly one for all primary school libraries.

Peter Stone  
Regional Education Officer, South West  
English Heritage



**Linley Sambourne House**  
A Historical workbook for teachers and children

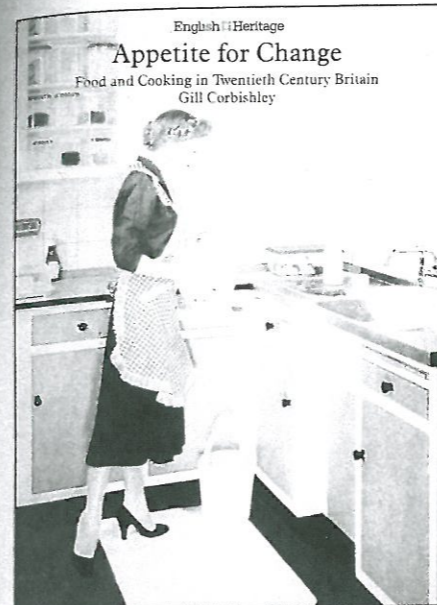
The Victorian Society, 1993.  
ISBN 0-901657-23-9  
£5.00  
Available from the house, or by post (add 34 pence for postage and packing) from The Victorian Society, 1 Priory Gardens, London W4 1TT.

Linley Sambourne House is a house museum owned by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and run by the Victorian Society. The house has largely been preserved as it was when Edward Linley Sambourne (cartoonist for Punch magazine) lived there from the time of his marriage in 1874.

The workbook provides background information on the later Victorian period, as well as giving details about the house itself. This background material, which is related back to the house where relevant, will be particularly useful to teachers of Key Stage 2 pupils working on the Victorian Britain study unit even without visiting the house itself. The information is clear, and the illustrations well chosen, although I felt that some of the captions could have been a little more helpful; some pictures are undated and no indication is given to their origins.

The section of the book which describes the rooms and contents of the house will be invaluable to teachers planning to visit with their pupils. An activity sheet for use in the house is included; careful planning will be needed as the maximum group size for a visit to the house is ten! The handbook also highlights issues of conservation, and presentation, and touches on the various sources that can be used in a study of Victorian Britain. I do wish, however, that the author had included a full extract from the inventory of 1877, as I found the small snippets referred to tantalising to say the least!

Jennie Fordham  
Regional Education Officer, South East and London  
English Heritage



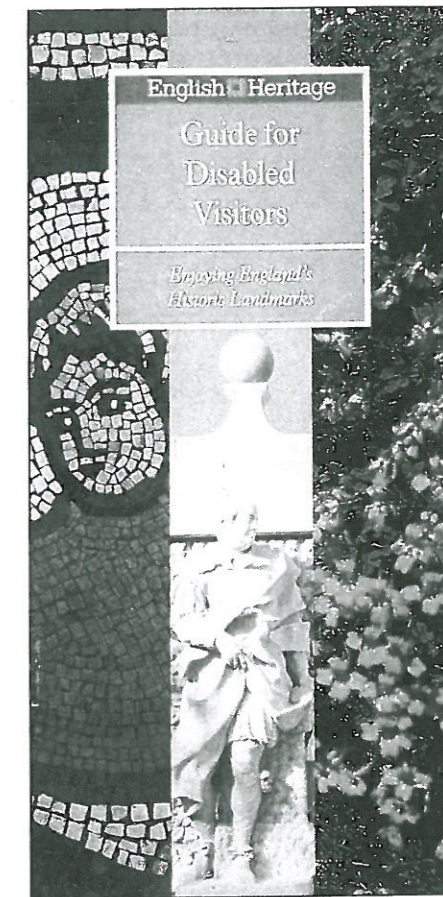
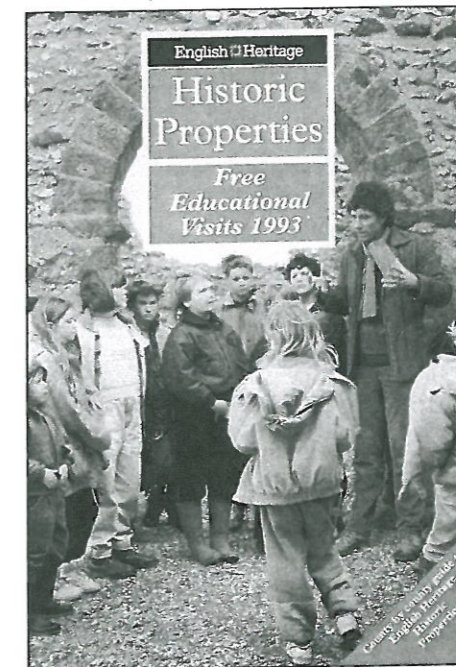
**Appetite for Change**  
Food and Cooking in Twentieth Century Britain  
Gill Corbishley

This new book looks at developments in British food from 1900 to the present day. The change from the days of horsedrawn vehicles making doorstep deliveries, sheep's head soup, cooks and kitchen maids to supermarkets, fromage frais and microwave ovens is described and reasons for change are suggested. Developments in energy, transport and packaging and in the kitchen itself are traced through the century. Aspects of change are illustrated in contrasting recipes: traditional, Second World War, from the first wave of affluence between the 1950s and 1970s and as the century ends.

The 36 page book is highly illustrated with contemporary material and is available, price £4.95 including postage and packing from: English Heritage, PO Box 229, Northampton, NN6 9RY. Please quote product code XQ 10086.

**Guide for Disabled Visitors**  
English Heritage has just published for the first time a guide containing details of facilities at all our staffed properties where much of the site, including its main features, may be enjoyed by disabled visitors. The guide is available on tape, as a braille version and in a large print version, county by county. Some properties, which are not suited to physically disabled people have been included because they are particularly rewarding for visitors with visual impairment. Details are given of parking and toilet facilities, access to shops, displays and refreshments, whether wheelchairs are available and any other special facilities such as tape tours.

The booklet will be helpful to any teacher who may be considering bringing a group with pupils who require special facilities to any of our properties and who need this information in order to plan a free visit effectively. For a free copy please write to us at our usual London address.



**In Pursuit of Good Ideas: The First Years of the Young Historian Scheme**

This book by John Fines has compiled details of the Scheme's funding, sponsorship and awards giving a list of all prize-winning schools, History Day activities and projects including several which have been either out-of-print for some time or never printed before. Price £4.00 to include postage and packaging. Please make cheques payable to the Young Historian Scheme and send your order to The Historical Association, 59a Kennington Road, London SE11 4JH.

Our new 1993 **Free Educational Visits** booklet is now available, including a county by county guide to all English Heritage Historic Properties and how to book free educational visits. To obtain your **free copy** just complete the slip below and return it to:  
English Heritage Education Service, Keysign House, 429 Oxford Street, London, W1R 2HD.

Please send me my free copy of the 1993 **Free Educational Visits** booklet.

Name.....

Address.....