

THE MUSEUM

THE museums attendances have risen by 2,000 to the satisfactory figure of 19,000 for the period April 1957 to March, 1958. The number up to December 1959, was 18,000, so the 1958-9 figure should prove a record one.

Undoubtedly, the temporary exhibitions have helped to attract the public. Two Buckinghamshire photographers, Mr. Cousins and Mr. Wooster, showed their work in the summer of 1958, and in the autumn of the same year an exhibition of Chinese art, on loan from the Victoria and Albert Museum, drew a large public. Rembrandt etchings were shown in March, 1959, and the works of four local artists in April and June. To mark the General Election, an exhibition showing the changes in Parliamentary representation and electoral procedure for Buckinghamshire was arranged. The national Press and television were attracted by some of the items, so a larger number of persons were made conscious of Aylesbury and the museum. The last

exhibition of 1959, held in October, showed a selection of modern sculpture and drawings. Although the comments on the works were mainly adverse, the public was pleased to have the opportunity of seeing, in Aylesbury, works of recent and living artists. The Aylesbury Art Society have also held two successful winter exhibitions.

A display of prehistoric relics found in the course of specialised enquiries in South-east Bucks. was organised by A. D. Lacaille of the Wellcome Museum, and kindly lent to Aylesbury for several months. Accompanied by a map, diagrams and photographs, two main groups of relics were represented, one referring to man in the older stages of his Palæolithic cultural development, and the other to his craftsmanship in a Mesolithic stage.

Much of the material from the Hambleton Roman Villa was sent to the Institute of Archæology to receive expert treatment. The objects of metal, in particular, were not in a good state of preservation. A selection of the pottery is now on show in some of the reconditioned Hambleton cases and more will be displayed later. This has left the large exhibition room less crowded. It will shortly be completely cleared for a temporary exhibition, after which natural history material can be displayed. A collection of natural history exhibits is being built up. This consists mainly of birds and smaller mammals.

A selection from the material acquired by the museum must inevitably be an arbitrary one for a short report. There has been a good balance over the main fields of the museum collections. Water-colour drawings of Buckinghamshire stained glass were made by Mr. Frank Butler. Oil-paintings and water-colours by Roger Fry were given by the executors of the late Miss Isobel Fry of Buckland. An oil-painting of Venice might be singled out as the most striking work, and, now it has been restored, it stands out as a fine example of the work of a man whose fame as a critic tends to overshadow his ability as a painter.

From the excavations carried out by the North Bucks. Archæological Group the museum received some complete Roman pots from Emberton and a host of sherds. A large collection of material from the excavations at The Mount, Princes Risborough, was also given. The work was carried out by Mr. Pavry and Group Captain Knocker. Their report can be read in *Records*, Vol. XVI, Pt. III. Roman remains from Tingewick were given by Miss K. M. Gardner. This includes a pair of Roman compasses in an excellent state of preservation. Some glassware was given by Mrs. Rogers and a miscellaneous collection of material of Buckinghamshire interest was presented by Mrs. Crouch.

Mr. C. F. Page presented a small working model of a wooden printing press which he made himself; it is perhaps to be hoped that a separate small display may be formed showing some aspects of printing, a craft so intimately connected with Aylesbury.

Identification inquiries have increased. An average of one object is brought in for opinion each day. The majority are copper coins and common fossils, but occasionally an object of exceptional interest arrives such as a Romano-British seal box with the decorative enamel in a remarkably complete state of preservation. The museum has been partially redecorated, and after the future decoration has been completed the building will wear an even more pleasing face.

A.D.P.W.

PARISH REGISTERS. The registers of the following parishes, beginning in the years indicated, have been deposited with the Society for safe custody:

Ashendon, 1732	Chetwode, 1583	Fleet Marston, 1630
Barton Hartshorn, 1752	Cholesbury, 1583	Preston Bissett, 1630
Chearsley, 1570	Edgcott, 1538	A.V.W.