

Appeal to open up Soane

SIR JOHN SOANE'S Museum, arguably the world's most atmospheric museum, has launched a public appeal to raise the last £500,000 needed for its £7 million project, 'Opening up the Soane'. Already, £6.5 million has been given, mainly through major grants, and now the public is invited to help with the final push needed to complete this ambitious programme for the labyrinthine spaces of 12, 13 and 14, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2. Plans include opening up the Soanes' private rooms with their original contents to the public for the first time, plus putting Sir John's architectural-model collection on permanent display in its re-created original setting; reinstating lost spaces, such as the Tivoli Recess and the sculpture and mirror-encrusted ante room; and creating new spaces and facilities.

Just £50 would pay for cleaning a piece of stained glass; £100 will cover the cleaning of a picture frame, and £750 would pay for the restoration of Mrs Soane's marble table. To donate, telephone 020-7440 4263 or visit www.soane.org

British Library Board



The Tivoli Recess, a lost space that could be restored

Barometer

Good week for

The Angling Trust

Three competitive fly-fishing organisations have merged with the trust, strengthening its position as a unified body for the angling world

The RSPB

It has announced a new nature reserve, Middleton Lakes in the River Tame valley in the Midlands, which will open on May 18

The Soil Association

It's celebrating the withdrawal of plans for Nocton's 'mega dairy' in Lincolnshire, but says the fight goes on against similar farming projects

Bad week for

Fisheries on rail line

The Angling Trust has identified more than 40 fisheries that could be adversely affected by the HS2 London-Birmingham rail link

Children's reading

Just as it was revealed that seven out of the top 10 most borrowed authors write for children, further library closures were announced

Scottish schools

More than 50% of foreign-language assistant teachers are being axed in council budget cuts

Yeo! singing farmers

THE Somerset family farming business Yeo Valley is on the hunt for its next musical success, following the triumph of a rap-style television advert featuring glamorous dairymaids and waving tractor drivers. Budding singer/songwriters should record their song and upload it onto the Tractor Factor YouTube channel (www.farmersguardian.com/tractorfactor, closing date March 31), after which the best three will be put to a public vote. There's a chance to win tickets to Glastonbury and perform the song at the festival—organiser Michael Eavis is a judge. Yeo Valley managing director Tim Mead explains: 'The rap advert received an unprecedented response from a relatively small burst of television exposure. Its popularity and the number of spoof videos that have been uploaded showed there's a great deal of untapped talent out there.'

Could you follow in the wellie marks of the Yeo Valley rappers?



A black and white English Springer Spaniel in a landscape by Gilpin, from the exhibition 'Man's Best Friend', at the Vestey Gallery, the British Sporting Art Trust, Newmarket, which opens next week (March 1–October 31) to coincide with Crufts. Some 40 works of art, from three centuries, have been loaned for this celebration of the dog—spaniels, terriers and greyhounds feature strongly, plus Munnings's pekingese, Black Knight