

Columns

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THE FRIENDS OF CHRIST CHURCH SPITALFIELDS
REGISTERED CHARITY 276056

Columns is the newsletter of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields who are leading the restoration of Nicholas Hawksmoor's church, one of the most important Baroque churches in Europe.

Please support us by subscribing or making a donation. Use the coupon in this issue to make a donation, or telephone the Friends' office on 020 7247 0165.

Gallery structures completed but still more to do

The present phase of the restoration of Christ Church includes work on the building's interior. The reinstatement of the floor structure of the aisle galleries in the first three months of this year shows the most dramatic changes to the interior of Christ Church since work began on the building twenty-five years ago. As our readers will already know, the restoration of Christ Church has involved extensive archaeological investigation to establish so far as possible what

was originally built. Red Mason, from Whitfield Partners, architects to the restoration, has worked on the research into the original galleries over the last twenty years. His painstaking work has been rewarded by the confirmation that the floor structure we have just built is as close as possible to that which Hawksmoor's carpenters built.

Red Mason writes: In 1866 the Rev. John Patteson asked the architect Ewan Christian to draw up plans for alterations to the interior of Christ Church. The builders George Myers carried out the works in six months and the church reopened in January 1867. The galleries in the north and



south aisles were removed, the gallery windows lengthened and the lower windows were blocked; the galleries at the west end of the church were rearranged; the large arches at the west end of the aisles were filled in and the box pews on the ground floor removed. The alterations, considered 'improvements', (a leaflet appealing for funds for the works describes the interior as both 'repulsive' and 'totally unsuitable') had radically changed the interior of the church and torn the heart out of Hawksmoor's design. For the last 130 years the visitor has seen only a shadow of the original.

How do we know what Hawksmoor's galleries looked like? The details shown on the few surviving drawings offer little help, but extensive physical evidence survived in the church: blocked beam holes in the columns and pilasters; bricked up joist holes in the walls. When the west end galleries were rearranged components from the eighteenth-century gallery fronts were incorporated in the new fronts. At each stage of the dismantling work all the evidence has been photographed, recorded and analysed. We are fortunate that the original building accounts survive among the papers of the Commissioners for the Fifty New Churches, and by comparing the physical evidence for the galleries with the relevant sections of the accounts we were able to reconstruct accurately all the details of the galleries: the floor structure, the original arrangement of the gallery fronts and the elaborately carved soffits, and even details of the plaster ceilings under the galleries (*see illustration opposite*).

To begin the restoration, in 1998 the upper galleries at the west end were dismantled and the large arches in the aisles were unblocked, and in 1999 work began on dismantling the lower galleries. With the discovery of a number of beams in their original positions, the final arrangement of the galleries at the west end was confirmed beyond doubt. In January 2000 scaffolding was erected and work began on rebuilding the aisle galleries. All the beams and joists have been put into the same pockets and holes in the columns and walls where the original ones sat, and at the west end the new beams sit in the pockets cut in the original beams by Hawksmoor's carpenters. The beams and joists have been fixed together using dowels and pegs, the same technique as that used in the eighteenth century.

Although there is still a considerable sum to raise before the galleries can be completed, the visitor can now appreciate Hawksmoor's interior for the first time in a hundred and thirty years. The reconstruction of the gallery floors has re-established crucial elements of the interior. The

light coming through the arches at the west end of the aisles articulates the massive walls at the end of the nave which support the tower and spire. As a result the differences between the spaces forming the aisles and the galleries, and the larger volume of the nave have been emphasised, and a greater importance has been given to the tripartite openings between the columns at either end of the nave. The proportions of the door openings on either side of the central door between the vestibule and the nave have been regained. The relationship between the aisle galleries and the organ gallery which was originally designed for 'The Vestry' (the predecessor of the local council), has been corrected and a mock up of one of the balustrade galleries erected on one side of the organ gallery. The line of the gallery floor has made sense of the high pedestals to the columns to the aisle arcade and restored the scale of the church. For the first time we can appreciate the proportions and complex relationships between the numerous interrelated volumes which make up the interior of the church.

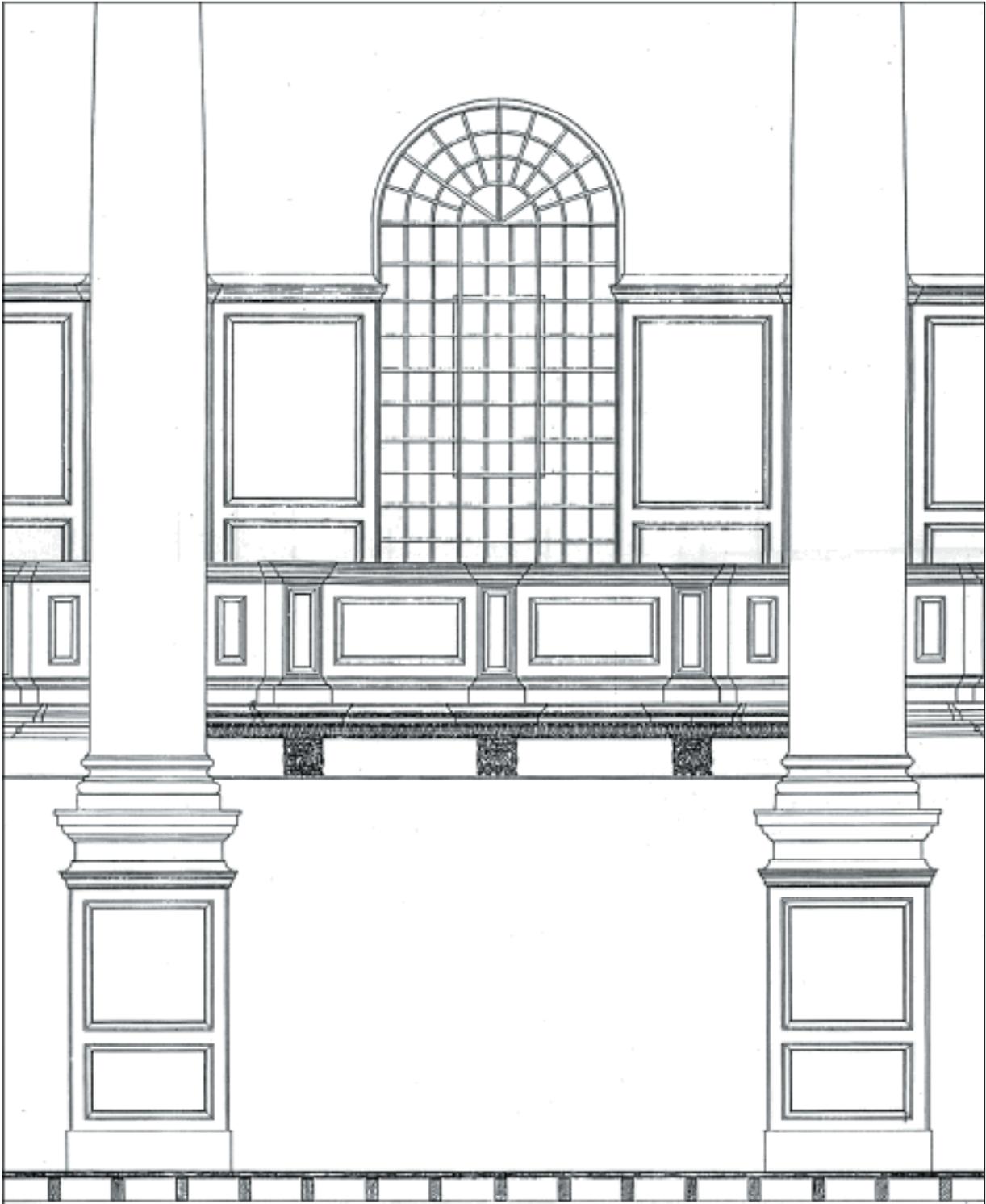
Whitfield Partners in conjunction with David Luard Conservation have been examining the remaining gallery fronts to establish where, after the nineteenth century alterations to the wood panels, each piece of wood fits. One panelled front has already been put temporarily in place and this shows off to impressive advantage how the finished galleries will look.

Until the east end staircases are reinstalled, the galleries cannot be used. So although visually the difference from the nave is striking, we are not able to utilize that space (approximately 300 extra seats) for concerts or even allow the public access to them to view the church from this level yet. The funds still need to be raised for the oak panelling to the fronts, the elaborate carving, the ceilings and seats. To finish the galleries, we must raise approximately £250,000 in order to draw down the promised funding.

This is your chance to make a visible difference to the inside of Christ Church. If you would like to discuss funding a whole balcony (panelled front, beam casing, seats etc.) please talk to the Friends' Office. Alternatively, donations of between £200 and £5,000 will help significantly towards putting in the eventual 300 seats.

With the gearing due to the Lottery funding, (for the inside of the building, your £25 enables us to do £100 of work) every little bit will help us to finish this part of the restoration and open the galleries for concerts and services.

Every pound counts. Please help us.



One bay of the proposed new fronts to the galleries (from a drawing by Whitfield Partners)

How to support the Friends

To become a Supporter of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields please make a donation of a minimum of £20 p.a. (£25 for overseas).

Supporters receive the Friends' quarterly newsletter *Columns*. They also receive advance notice of the Friends' series of special tours and lectures and special events organised exclusively for Supporters.

Your gift will help the Friends unlock grant aid. For every £25 donated to the Restoration Appeal we can draw down a further £75 in grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage as their generous grants must be matched by gifts from our Supporters. We still have £1.5 million to raise.

You can give money in two ways: by cheque (banker's or CAF), or by Banker's Order. Banker's Orders allow us to plan with more certainty and help keep down our administrative costs. Please complete the appropriate part of this page.

I enclose my cheque for:

- £20 £25 £50 £250 £1,000
 other

towards the restoration of Christ Church Spitalfields

towards the restoration of the Richard Bridge Organ

I confirm that the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields should reclaim tax on this/these donation(s) and that I am a UK taxpayer.

From time to time we would like to pass your name and address to other organisations or charities whose products and services we think may be of interest to you.

I would prefer *not* to receive mail from them

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Tel no.....

We will process Banker's Orders and forward them to your bank.

Thank you. Please return the completed page to:
FOCCS, FREEPOST, LONDON E1 6BR

Recent gifts

The Friends are grateful to the many individuals and organisations who are giving with such generosity to the Restoration Appeal. We value donations large and small.

The following have all given single donations since the last issue of *Columns*. Others donors prefer to remain anonymous. We would like to thank them all for their support.

Gift of £5000
The Jerusalem Trust

Gift of £2000
The Signet Trust

Gifts of between £500 and £1000
Michael Palin
Eleanor Murray
A F Nafzger
Stephen Cockburn Charitable Trust

Gifts of between £250 and £500
Mr T F Jackson
J C R D'Albiac
Ashurst Morris Crisp
Allchurches Trust
Mr & Mrs Henry Buxton

Gifts of between £50 and £100
Sheila Adam
Sainer Charity
R Cunningham
Norbert McDermott
Mr R Pryor
Mr & Mrs Rawlings
Catherine Pantsios
S Carr
Professor P C Wilkinson
Mr J R Fowling
Miss P C A Butterworth
H J Critchley
Dr Henry R T Summerson
Damien Vaugh, Lord Breanamore
Andrew Byrne

Banker's Order

To: Bank
of
.....
..... Branch address
Re my account No

Please pay to the Royal Bank of Scotland plc of 67 Lombard Street EC3P 3DL, Sort Code 15-10-00 for the credit of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields Account No. 13075487 the sum of £ (insert amount) on and each anniversary thereof until cancelled by me. This donation is in addition to*/replaces* previous standing orders, if any, in favour of the Charity.

..... Signature
..... Name (print)
..... Date

**delete as applicable*

Nave Parapets and East Elevation

The last item of work required to make the church wind and weather tight for the next few centuries is the repair of the nave parapets and the east elevation. We hope that work will start shortly.

The nave parapets are a particular concern as they are in very poor condition. Since they are almost invisible they are a difficult item to appeal for funds for. The Friends need to raise £280,000 from their supporters in order to draw down Heritage Lottery funding. We are hoping that our supporters will appreciate how essential this work is and help us match the promised Lottery funds.

Spitalfields Festival 2000: 5-23 June

The Festival returns to Christ Church in June with an exciting series of events, exploring music from the very earliest to the newest. Judith Weir, in her last Festival as Artistic Director, has once again drawn on the strengths of Christ Church with a survey of music by J S Bach, music which was being written at almost exactly the same time that Christ Church was built. Come to hear Bach's beautiful cello suites, or you can choose from medieval Spanish-based music, saxophone quartets, new music from Jane's Minstrels and Kantak, Indian ragas from the Mishra brothers, string quartets and the choirs of Westminster Abbey and St John's College, Cambridge, as well as several Education and Community Programme performances by local school pupils.

Alison Bauld has been commissioned to write a piece for the Festival this year and *Pluto* is being performed by Jane's Minstrels on 8 June at 7.30pm. It is an exhilarating exploration of the acoustics of Christ Church, in the guise of the architect Nicholas Hawksmoor, returning to the church after 300 years and not to be missed.

The Festival regrets that as there are so many events and rehearsals taking place in the church in June, it is not always possible to admit visitors to Christ Church while rehearsals are taking place. But with free lunchtime and 6pm Prelude concerts, alongside the 7.30pm events, there are plenty of opportunities to see Christ Church in its newly-galleried form.

Call the Festival Hotline for a free leaflet or to book tickets on 020 7377 1362. Or visit our new website at www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk and let us know what you think!

Budget tax changes benefit charities

The Trustees are delighted that the March 2000 budget contained more tax favourable ways of giving to charities. The Trustees very much hope that this will encourage our donors to contribute to the restoration for the interior of the church and to the Organ Fund, the two areas which now need substantial more funds. These supplement the continuing benefits available to donors who contribute through legacies.

There are three possibilities for tax efficient donations from 6 April 2000:

1 Gift Aid and Covenants

Gift Aid relief will be available to a charity on *all* donations at 28%. In order to ensure that the Charity benefits from the tax, donors will only have to make a declaration to the Charity expressing their wish that the Charity should reclaim Income or Capital Gains Tax paid by the donor and that the donor pays tax.

As a consequence, there will be no tax significance to any deed of covenant made after 5 April 2000, but existing deeds of covenant will continue to be treated for tax purposes as previously.

2 Give As You Earn (GAYE)

Employees can give through the payroll and the donation is made before PAYE is deducted. The previous limit of £1,200 has been removed and for the next three years, the Charity will be able to recover an additional 10% of the gross value of the gift.

3 Gifts of Shares

Gifts of listed shares and securities will be eligible for tax relief to the donor. This covers both Income Tax and Capital Gains Tax. For example, if shares are standing at a gain to a 40% tax payer donor, he or she can claim the donation as a deduction from income tax, saving 40%, and also not pay Capital Gains Tax on the gift.

If you would like more information, please contact the Friends' office.

The Friends' Millennium Quiz

We are delighted to announce that the winner of the Friends' Millennium Quiz (*Columns 13*) was Fay Cattini whose name was first out of the hat with the most correct answers. To see how good your knowledge was, the answers are printed below:

- Q 1 How many 'Fifty New Churches' are there?
A Twelve
- Q 2 How many architects were involved in the design of these churches?
A Four: Hawksmoor, James, Gibbs and Archer
- Q 3 When was the foundation stone of Christ Church, Spitalfields laid?
A 1715. Foundations started in mid 1714 but the foundation stone was laid by Edward Peck in 1715
- Q 4 What is missing from the spire?
A Three tiers of Lucarnes (dormer windows) in the four principal faces, carved decoration running up the four corners and a large capping stone; removed in 1822
- Q 5 Who designed the organ?
A Richard Bridge
- Q 6 When were the clock dials first illuminated with gas lighting?
A 1866
- Q 7 Where was the clock before 1822?
A On the west elevation of the tower, at the bottom of the large louvre, just above the bulls-eye window
- Q 8 What were the two cataclysmic events which happened to Christ Church in the first half of the nineteenth century?
A A fire caused by the 'steeple keeper' on 17 February 1836 and a lightning strike which caused another fire on 3 January 1841
- Q 9 What is the name of the Victorian architect who removed the galleries?
A Ewan Christian
- Q 10 When were the steps on the south side removed?
A Unknown
- Q 11 In what modern novel does Christ Church feature and who wrote it?
A *Hawksmoor*, Peter Ackroyd
- Q 12 What was the name of Fournier Street in the eighteenth century?
A Church Street
- Q 13 Where did the memorials in the vestibule, at the west end of the church, come from?
A Episcopal Jews' Chapel in Palestine Place, Bethnal Green
- Q 14 What was the name given to the churchyard in the first two decades of this century?
A 'Itchy Park'
- Q 15 When was the south door reopened?
A 1979
- Q 16 Where was the fire engine shed located in the eighteenth century?
A On the south side of the portico, on the edge of the churchyard. The fire engine shed, watch-house and school stood in a row facing north, before they were demolished when Commercial Street was formed. Work took place between 1843 and 1858.
- Q 17 How many bells are there?
A Eight
- Q 18 Name the 'order', or style, of the main columns in Christ Church
A Composite
- Q 19 The Clarendon Building at Oxford was designed by Hawksmoor and Townesend to accommodate what sort of machinery?
A Printing presses
- Q 20 Where is Hawksmoor buried?
A Shenley Churchyard, Hertfordshire

Dates for your diary

Spitalfields Festival

Talk: The Restoration of the Galleries

Tuesday 6 June 1.05 pm Christ Church

Tuesday 13 June 1.30 pm (note time) Christ Church

Red Mason of Whitfield Partners, architects for the Restoration, will talk about the changes made to the interior of Christ Church. It will be one of the first chances for members of the public to see the changes in the church.

Admission free, retiring collection for the Restoration Appeal. Places must be booked in advance through the Spitalfields Festival Box Office 020 7377 1362, limited availability. It is not possible to reserve places through the Friends' office.

Day Trip to the Mausoleum at Castle Howard, Yorkshire

Thursday 15 June

This is a rare opportunity to visit the Mausoleum at Castle Howard, designed by Hawksmoor and started in 1729 shortly after the completion of Christ Church. The Mausoleum is not open to the general public and for many years it has been in a dangerous state and could not be visited. By kind permission of the Hon Simon Howard, the Friends have been allowed to arrange a visit there. The expert guide for the day will be Andrew Martindale, caseworker with the Georgian Group. There will also be an opportunity to see the house and possibly some of the more remote garden ornaments.

The cost per person is £80 (incl. of travel, entrance fees & notes). Numbers are strictly limited. The group will leave King's Cross at around 8.30am, travel by train and coach, and will return to King's Cross at approximately 8.00pm that evening. Please note that the walk to the Mausoleum is across rough farmland and hard hats will need to be worn.

For further information and a booking form, contact the Friend's office, 020 7247 0165.

Nicholas Hawksmoor's London Churches

Saturday 16 September (all day)

All day bus tour in London to visit the six remarkable Hawksmoor churches built as a result of the Fifty New Churches Act of 1711. This year we are delighted that our guide will be the architectural historian William Palin, Assistant

Curator (Education) at Sir John Soane's Museum and a trustee of the Mausolea and Monuments Trust.

The cost per person is £50 (£45) for paid up Supporters. (Supporters are those who have given a donation of £20 or more (£25 overseas) in the last twelve months.)

For further information and a booking form, contact the Friends' office 020 7247 0165.

Open House 2000

Saturday 23 (all day) & Sunday 24 September (afternoon only)

As reported in *Columns* 13, last year Open House '99 attracted a record number of visitors to Christ Church. There will be more information about this year's event in the next issue of *Columns* and we will look forward to seeing you there. If you think you can volunteer your time to help us at this weekend please ring the Friends' office 020 7247 0165.

Volunteers needed

To help the Friends at the Spitalfields Festival 5-23 June 2000

We need friendly people to hand out Friends' leaflets to Festival concert-goers and to talk generally about the work of the Friends and the Restoration to interested people.

You will get a free ticket to the concert and will be fully briefed. Either team up with a friend and make an evening of it or have the opportunity to meet some of the other people who support the work of the Friends.

Please contact Alice Graham in the Friends' office: 020 7247 0165.

In the office and at other events

The Friends office is run with a small number of staff in order to keep our overheads to a minimum. Therefore, as well as at the Festival, we need volunteers for work in the office, which might include help with the mailings, and also for our special events.

Personal column

Derek Stride

My first impression of Spitalfields, at the age of fourteen, was of a dark dirty place, with piles of rubbish on the pavements and vagrant alcoholics lying on the streets or staggering on their way. My father had been offered, and accepted, the job as Rector at Christ Church, and being a man of social conscience, took up the challenge. I viewed the move to Spitalfields with trepidation.

We arrived in the Rectory, which was big, damp and untidy, and soon it became a wonderful home, not only to us but to many others from our parish and beyond. My parents' ability to build relationships with people from all walks of life was amazing. Everyone was valued. In the kitchen you might walk in to find a city gent waiting for my father, drinking tea with a vagrant alcoholic woman waiting while my mother sorted her out some clothes or food.

The Fournier Street of the late 1960s was a very different world to that today. I look back and can only say that it was Dickensian. Some of our local friends still lived in tenement blocks with shared amenities. At our church jumble sales there were sometimes fights over the clothes.

The only house in the street that was fully residential was the Rectory. The other houses had long succumbed to the pressure of local industry and were mixture of sweatshops, fruit warehouses (for Spitalfields Market), and next door was a furrier. There were a few scattered flats in the attics of some of the houses and we made friends with the kids who lived there. The street was busy and noisy with vans and lorries from the range of firms as market people (fruit, not City) mingled with local business people, prostitutes and vagrants.

The courtyard at the front of the church was surrounded by a long curved railing with a stone base. As my brother and I would come home from school, there would be up to forty vagrant alcoholics sitting along the railings, resting after working as casual labourers in the market. They would be drinking anything from cheap wine to meths. One reason for the high number of vagrants in Spitalfields (more than 300 by some estimates) at that time was partly the availability of casual labour with the fruit market, plus the availability of cheap booze and accommodation in the form of derelict buildings and bomb sites.

We used to go down the Crypt most nights and came to consider many of these men our friends. We also learnt which ones to avoid.

One of my strongest memories of our first weeks in Spitalfields was stepping out of the Rectory on

Saturday morning and wondering where everyone had gone. The area was very heavily Jewish in those days, and as it was the Sabbath, no-one was around.

Things have changed a great deal since then, but Spitalfields is still very much home for me and my family. One of the greatest gifts my parents gave me was to move to Spitalfields.

Derek Stride is a trustee of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields and a churchwarden of Christ Church. His father, the Revd Eddie Stride was Rector of Christ Church 1969-89.

Thank you

The campaign to restore Christ Church relies on the support of many people. We would like to thank the following who have recently given us support in kind:

Ashurst Morris Crisp for printing this issue of *Columns* and for other printed material.

We are also grateful for help in kind from ABN AMRO, SDG, Herbert Smith.

We would like to thank those who come and help both in the office and at special events. We are particularly grateful to Fiona Ligonnet and Christopher Woodward who provide reliable and regular back up in the office throughout the year.

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