

# Columns

NUMBER 27 • AUTUMN 2006

THE FRIENDS OF CHRIST CHURCH SPITALFIELDS  
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 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 form with this issue to make a donation, or telephone the Friends' office on 020 7859 3035, or visit our web site: [www.christchurchspitalfields.org](http://www.christchurchspitalfields.org)*

## All stops out for the organ restoration

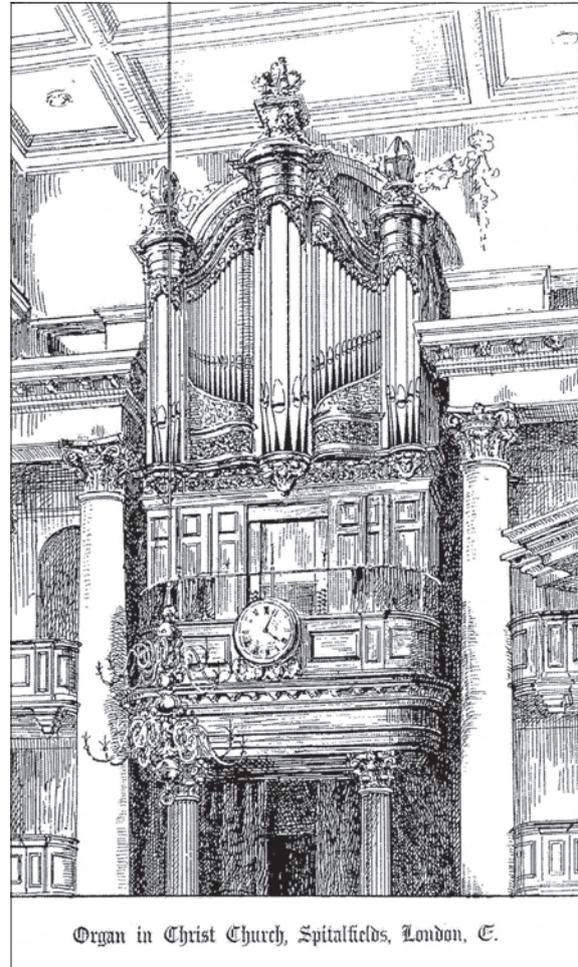
Just as Christ Church is the largest and grandest of the six churches built by Nicholas Hawksmoor, the organ installed in 1735 was the largest organ in England for a hundred years. Its builder, Richard Bridge, is considered to be one of the most significant builders of the time in Europe and the organ at Christ Church is probably his finest.

The Bridge organ is one of the few large English organs to survive from the age of Handel and it is of European significance. Its restoration will play an important role in the understanding of the cultural heritage of eighteenth century England as well contributing to the broader cultural, liturgical and social life of Spitalfields.

Contemporary vestry accounts remark 'By the most competent judges the tone is pronounced to be unexcelled, combining sweetness and great dignity, breadth and power'. It was also notable in its size, range and appearance. The original organ had over two thousand pipes and three manuals; its range reached down to contra G, five notes lower even than found on organs built today. Its case is of solid walnut and the exuberantly carved double serpentine front is one of only eight ever made to that pattern and by far the largest. The Friends intend to restore the organ to Bridge's original scheme of 1735 with the addition of a small pedal organ to increase musical flexibility and enhance its usefulness. Sufficient evidence of Bridge's original organ survives to enable it to be reconstructed with confidence.

To raise the funds necessary to do the work is a big challenge. However, supporters will be glad to hear that the fund for the restoration has recently received some significant donations including a very generous bequest by Eric Elstob, former chairman of the Friends. We would like to thank all those Supporters who have given so generously.

The Friends are seeking grants to fund the works and have launched an appeal for £250,000 to match them. As we saw from the restoration of Christ Church itself, every donation, large or small,



Organ in Christ Church, Spitalfields, London, E.

*The organ at Christ Church, from a nineteenth century engraving (source unknown).*

counted and it was thanks to our two thousand plus supporters that we were able to achieve such a remarkable success. If you think you are able to help us again, please consider making a donation now. Thank you.

*“A historical instrument of undoubted international importance, stature and significance . . . an undisputed treasure of Handelian times.”*

Dr Gerald Gifford  
Honorary Keeper of Music  
Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

## More glory for Christ Church

Since the last edition of *Columns* (No 26) the restoration at Christ Church has been recognised with three further awards.

In March 2006 Christ Church Spitalfields received a Civic Trust award. These awards are given to projects in the United Kingdom that make an outstanding contribution to the quality and appearance of the environment. They recognise 'exemplary, high quality schemes'. The judges wrote:

This project is a remarkable story of perseverance, meticulous research, and uncompromising rigour in restoring this church to a manner that Hawksmoor would have recognised instantly. Great care has been taken in the re-use and renewal of materials, energy conservation, and future maintenance costs... In addition to religious use, the building is also let for appropriate functions to secure funding for the church's future. Having survived threats of demolition, the project should be a source of great pride to all those who laboured unwavering over the years to see it reinstated as a place of worship and community use.

Christ Church has also been awarded two prestigious awards by the RIBA: these awards are respected worldwide for their recognition of the highest architectural standards.

Christ Church was given a RIBA restoration award at the ceremony in July and six weeks later received a Conservation Award and was short listed for the 2006 Crown Estate Conservation Award which will be made later in the autumn at the Stirling Prize dinner.

## Christ Church Spitalfields awards for the restoration

2006 RIBA Conservation Award/London and short listed for the 2006 Crown Estate Conservation Award

2006 RIBA Restoration Award

2006 Civic Trust Award

2005 Georgian Group Architectural Award: Restoration of a Georgian Church

2005 The Wood Awards: Winner in the Conservation/Restoration Category

2005 Building of the Year Award, Royal Fine Art Commission Trust

A specialist award for 'A Glorious Restoration'

2004 Stone Federation's Natural Stone Awards: Commendation

## Simon Sainsbury

The Friends are very sad to acknowledge the recent death of Simon Sainsbury in September aged 76.

Simon had taken a close personal interest in supporting the restoration of Christ Church for many years. He was a Patron of the Friends and he will be sorely missed.

## New Publications

The Friends have recently published two new postcards:



*The restored interior*



*The font, restored in 2006*

Cards are 40p each. Minimum postal order is £4.00.

These and other publications & cards produced by the Friends are available on Tuesdays and Sundays in Christ Church or by downloading an order form from our website.

## Christmas Cards

The Friends have three designs available this year including a new image showing the decorated plaster ceilings of the nave & aisles at Christ Church. An order form is enclosed with this edition. All proceeds go towards the work of the Friends. Thank you for your support.

## Thank you

The Friends are grateful for the generosity of the many individuals and organisations who support the Restoration Appeal. We would like to thank law firm Ashurst for generously providing an office; for printing this issue of *Columns* and other printed material. We value donations large and small. Thank you. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who prefer to remain anonymous and those who give to the restoration by standing order, thereby saving on administrative costs. We would like to thank the following for their recent donations:

### Gifts of £25 and over

George Allan\*  
Roy Aubertin\*  
Ray Ayriss\*  
Bruce A Bailey  
Mr & Mrs Keith Baker  
Kathleen Bates  
Michael Blighton  
Richard Bready  
David Brown  
Patricia Drummond  
Sir Edward Ford  
Christine Fosh  
John Fowling  
Richard Garnett\*  
Mrs J C George\*  
Mr R E George\*  
Veronica Gilbert  
Barbara Glayzer\*  
Mr G M Hart  
Frank Hermann  
Dr D P Howlett\*  
Peter Hurford\*  
Mrs J I H Hutchings  
Mary Knox  
Roy LeMarechal  
Valerie Browne Lester\*  
John Loveless  
Brian Mace\*  
Harry Mathews\*  
Andrew Mills  
Paul Mounsey  
Terence Muzzell\*  
John Pettit\*  
Mr W J R Price  
Alan Regin  
Robin Richardson  
Hazel Roberts  
Simon Scott Plummer\*  
Mary Stephens

Thelma Stollar\*

Jenifer White  
Martin Whiteley  
Jeremy Wong\*

### Gifts of £100 and over

Mr & Mrs Nicholas Baring  
Mrs E Brihi-Brightwell\*  
Sir Peter Cazalet  
John Dallas  
Glossop Pryor Foundation  
Gresham House plc  
Derek Hilton  
McCorquodale Charitable Trust  
Ken Potter\*  
The Sainer Charity\*  
Dimity Spiller  
Roderick Thomson

### Gifts of £200 and over

Julian Cazalet  
Geoffrey Collens\*  
George Josselyn\*  
John Peck  
Pauline Pinder  
Mr & Mrs Peter Smith\*  
Frederick Sowan  
Mr & Mrs S Summerson  
Sir Anthony Touche  
Philip Vracas

### Gifts of £500 and over

Dr Oliver Black  
David & Julia Cade\*  
Margaret Davis\*  
Hamish Parker\*  
Peter Stormonth Darling

\*partly or fully for the Richard Bridge Organ Appeal

## How to support the Friends

To become an acknowledged Supporter of the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields please make a minimum annual donation of £25 (£30 for overseas). You can contribute towards the restoration of Christ Church or the Richard Bridge Organ. Supporters receive the Friends' newsletter *Columns* and advance notice of tours, lectures and other special events that the Friends organise.

You can give money in several ways:

- by **payroll giving** through Give As You Earn
- with a **credit or debit card** through our web site.

Or, by completing the appropriate parts of this page:

- by **standing order** (helping us to plan ahead and keep down administrative costs)
- by bank or CAF **cheque**.

### Standing Order

Your bank and account details:

To ..... Bank  
of .....  
.....  
.....  
..... Bank address  
Sort code .....-.....-..... A/c no .....

Please pay to the Royal Bank of Scotland plc of 62-63 Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 8LA, sort code 15-10-00 for the credit of The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields Account No. 13075487 the sum of:

£ ..... each  month  quarter  year starting on dd/mm/yy (no earlier than one month from today, please) until further notice. This donation is in addition to\*/replaces\* previous Standing Orders, if any, in favour of the Charity. The Friends will process Standing Orders and forward them to your bank. \*delete as applicable

Please complete the sections below:

I enclose my cheque for:

- £25  £30  £50  £250  £1,000  
 other £. . . . .

Please make cheques payable to:  
The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields.

Please complete the sections below:

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK taxpayer please Gift Aid your donation and increase your gift by 28% at no extra cost to you. For every £1 that you give to us, we can reclaim the tax to make your donation worth £1.28 through the Gift Aid scheme if you sign the Gift Aid declaration.

I am a UK taxpayer and would like the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields to treat all donations I make since 6 April 2000 (and until I notify you otherwise) as Gift Aid donations. I understand that I must have paid an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax equal to the tax you reclaim on my donations.

Signature .....

For further information about Gift Aid, visit HM Revenue and Customs' website:  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/ir65.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/leaflets/ir65.htm)

Please allocate my donation towards the restoration of:

- Christ Church Spitalfields  
 The Richard Bridge Organ

The Friends would like to acknowledge gifts of £25 or more in *Columns*, but if you wish to remain anonymous please tick the box below :

- Please do not print my name in *Columns*

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Telephone number .....

E-mail address .....

Data Protection Act 1998: the information you provide will only be used by the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields and will not be passed to any other organisations.

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

## Website news

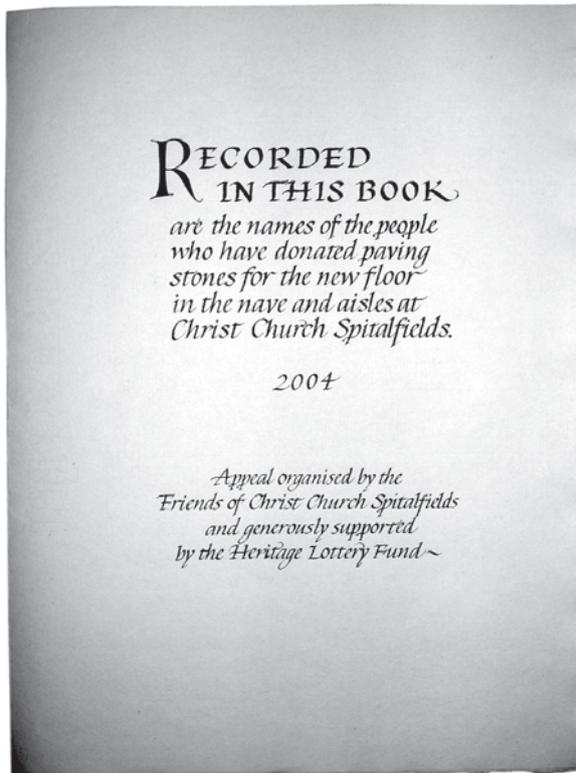
The Monument section of the Friends' website has been updated. A complete catalogue of all the monuments in the church can be searched by name. There is a new photograph of each monument together with a transcription of its text.

As you will see if you visit this section, some of the monuments have texts written in Hebrew which we have been unable to translate. We would welcome help with the transcription. Please contact the Friends' office.

Along with the cleaning of the large Ladbroke and Peck monuments at the east end of the church, a programme of works to clean all the wall monuments, mostly fixed to the walls on the west stairs, has been devised. It is hoped that this work will be carried out early in 2007. The work is of a specialist nature and each of the thirty-one monuments will cost around £900 to do. This is part of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant aided works. The matching funds needed for each monument is £225. If you would like to make a donation to help with these works, please use the form enclosed. The Friends would like to thank all those who have so far contributed to this appeal.

## Book of the Floor Appeal

The Friends have recently received the appeal book which contains dedications from all those who contributed to the new stone floor at Christ Church. This book has been beautifully designed and lettered by Nancy Winters, Fellow of the Society of Scribes & Illuminators.



The book is currently kept in the Church Office and can be viewed there by appointment. Please bear in mind that the office is only staffed part time, so please make arrangements well in advance by telephoning 020 7247 7202.

Those subscribers who are unable to make a visit will shortly be able to view illustrations of all the book's pages on the Friends' web site at: [www.christchurchspitalfields.org](http://www.christchurchspitalfields.org)

## Dates for your diary

The Friends are planning their next tour of the six London churches designed by Hawksmoor. If you would be interested in receiving early information about it please contact the Friends' office either by post or by email.

### Gabrieli Consort and Players

are resident at Christ Church Spitalfields. Their next concerts, are:

Wednesday 22 November: Monteverdi/Stravinsky, *Mass*

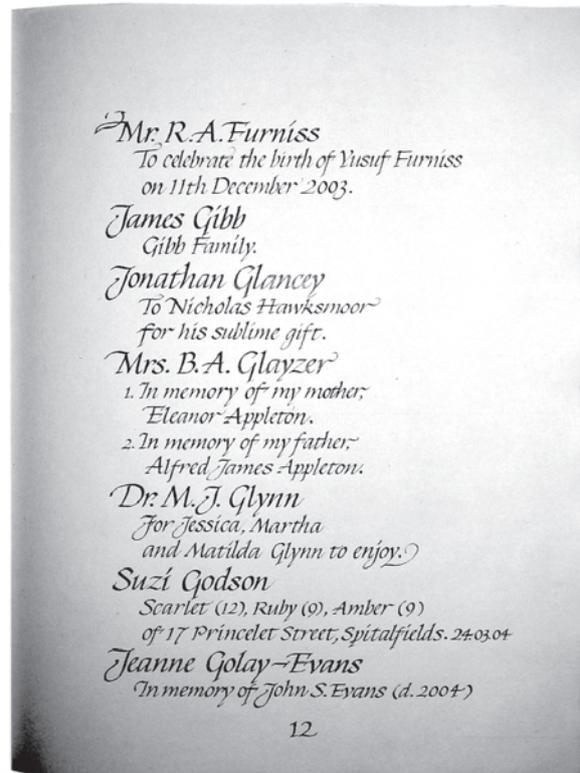
Saturday 25 November: Handel, *Acis & Galatea* both at 7.30pm

For further details call the Barbican box office: 0845 120 7543 or visit [www.gabrieli.com](http://www.gabrieli.com).

### Spitalfields Festival

11–19 December

For programme details and further information please visit [www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk](http://www.spitalfieldsfestival.org.uk).



## The bells! The bells!

*Alan Regin, steeplekeeper at Christ Church Spitalfields for the past eighteen years*

The bells at Christ Church have been associated with the Society of Royal Cumberland Youths ('The Cumberlands'), who were founded in 1747, for most of the last 259 years: it was indeed members of that Society who installed the current ring in 1969–70. The eight bells, formerly at St Stephen's Clapham Park, now demolished, were cast in 1919 at the foundry of Gillett & Johnston in Croydon. The tenor, the heaviest bell, weighs just over 17cwt (about 865kg). They are 'hung' in an iron and steel frame and are rung by rope and wheel, one ringer per bell. Each bell is hung to allow it to swing through slightly more than 360 degrees and then return in the opposite direction and ring once on each rotation.

As steeplekeeper I act as the liaison between the Society and the Church in matters concerning the bells. Our aim is to ring the bells for services at least once a month and at other times when requested by the Rector, for example for special services or weddings. The bells are also used by the Cumberlands for practice, and also by them and others on occasions such as visitors on outings from across the UK or further afield, and other groups of ringers wanting to come and ring peals and quarter peals. The bells are well regarded by ringers for their tone and 'go': how they sound and how easily they ring. We have an effective 'sound control' system in the tower which prevents much of the sound being heard outside. This is opened for service ringing, making the bells *much* louder outside, but while it is closed at other times our close neighbours don't always appreciate our efforts!

When we ring we most often ring 'methods': effectively pieces of music for ringers. Because of the mechanics of a bell a method has to be a constantly flowing thing; we are unable, for instance, to ring one bell three times in succession. We start by ringing 'rounds', sounding each bell in order from the lightest (with the highest note) to the heaviest (with the deepest note), and each time we ring this is one 'change'. When we start the method the bells start moving position, moving one place either way or staying in the same place. The aim here is to keep the same rhythm: we try not to leave gaps or crash the bells on one another, not as easy as it sounds.



*The Peal Board commemorates the record length peal of London Surprise Major which was rung to the memory of Eric Elstob.*

The start of a method from rounds could be:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
2 1 4 3 6 5 8 7  
2 4 1 6 3 8 5 7  
4 2 6 1 8 3 7 5  
4 6 2 8 1 7 3 5  
6 4 8 2 7 1 5 3  
6 8 4 7 2 5 1 3  
8 6 7 4 5 2 3 1  
8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1  
...

This method, called 'Plain Hunt on 8', has sixteen different changes with the bells starting and finishing in rounds. Only eight changes are shown above, but readers could try, using the table, to complete the full sixteen changes, arriving back with the bells in the order 12345678. The sixteen changes would only take about 35 seconds to ring, but a 'peal' of 5,000 or more different changes would take about three hours. The peal board commemorates the record peal at Christ Church of London Surprise Major: 17,280 changes that took 11 hours and 35 minutes of non stop ringing by the same eight people!

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**Heritage Lottery Fund**



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