

Number 4 Spring 1996

Columns

The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields
Registered Charity 276056

Columns is the supporter's bulletin 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.

Use the coupon sent with this newsletter to make a donation - or telephone the Friends office on 0171-247-0165.

Record Lottery grant and major Sainsbury gift give restoration green light

The restoration of Christ Church has taken a massive leap forward with news that the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) has granted £2,441,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. And we have just heard that the Sainsbury family will give £500,000 through The Monument Trust.

Eric Elstob, Chairman of the Friends, said 'This is thrilling news. It brings completing the restoration by AD 2000 within our grasp.'

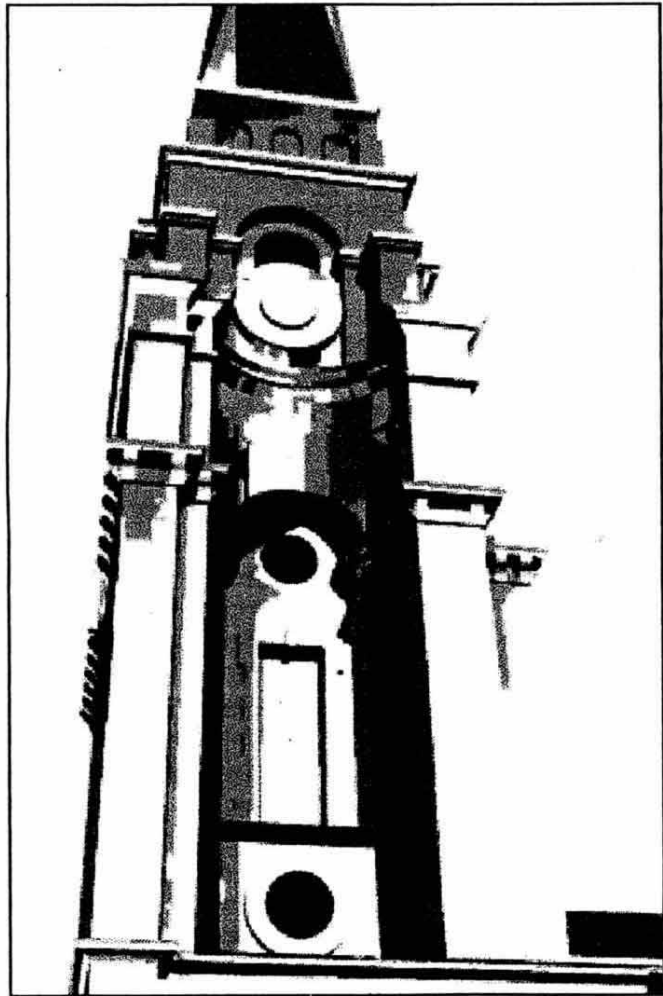
The Lottery grant - the NHMF's largest ever to a parish church - will enable a start on repairs to the exterior stonework this year and a start on major elements of the interior restoration. The Sainsbury gift will meet much of the balance needed to complete restoration of the interior. Tender documents for Phase One will be sent out to contractors later this month.

The NHMF was founded in 1980 by the government as a memorial to those who have given their lives for the UK. Since 1994 it has been one of the National Lottery distributors. The

NHMF is governed by independent trustees chaired by Lord Rothschild.

The Sainsbury Family have a long-standing record of exceptional generosity and the Monument Trust has a special interest in architectural projects of the highest quality.

Roland Jeffery, the Friends Campaign Director said 'This large grant and the Sainsbury gift are fantastic news. It is a challenge to all our supporters and we hope the news will encourage them to give help as well. About 10% of our total target for the restoration will come from small donations of under £100. Every single gift counts, is very much appreciated, and will be individually acknowledged'



The west tower of Christ Church, where external restoration work will soon begin, from the south.

*This image was produced for **Columns** from a computer model made by Christopher Woodward, an architect and co-author with Edward Jones of*

A Guide to the Architecture of London

Recent Gifts

The Friends are grateful to the many individuals and bodies who are giving with such generosity to the restoration of Christ Church. We value donations large and small; without them we will not be able to achieve our ambitious objectives.

The following people and bodies have all made donations or have given above the annual subscription to the Friends since the last issue of Columns. We wish to thank them all for their kind support.

If you would like a covenant form or would like to discuss giving to Christ Church, please telephone the Friends office on 0171-247-0165 and speak to us or leave a message.

Mr N.P. Barfield	Mr and Mrs P. Ellis
Lady Bernard	Judith Borrow
Mis P.C.A. Butterworth	Belinda Cadbury
Miss A.L. Chegwiddden	Mr G.A. Collens
Mr A. Cooke	Miss S.J. Crofts
Eric Elstob	Lord Henderson
Mrs J. Hoffbrand	Dr D.P. Howlett
Mr .G. Martin Leake	Ms E.A. Robbins
Mrs H. Roberts	Dr P.D. Simmons
Mrs R.M. Simon	Mrs G. Spence
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Revd Paul Bowtell	Ms S.N. Jolley
The Lesley David Trust	Mr D. Mckay
Mrs K.M. Bates	Mr K. Arnold
Miss M.C. Steed	Mrs N.M. Smith
Juliet Maurer	Miss D.A. Bates
Mr M.J.F. Pearce	Susan Adderley
Mr R.K.D. Symes	Miss P.M. Snell
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Mr I.G. Harder	Mr R.P. Griffiths
Mr and Mrs M.J. O'Brien	Mrs E. Wolffe
H.M. Fraser	Mr M.L. Sheppard
Revd Alexander Dick	Mr Ole Kverndal
Lord Boston	Mr A.K.F. Butterfield
Foreign & Colonial Investment Trust	
The Wilbraham Charitable Trust	
Mrs A. Alexander	Mr J.M. Dyson
Deborah Jeffs	Mrs D.C. Fraser
Prof. J.R. Lander	Mrs M.H. Knox
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Dr M. Archer	Mr J.R. Fowling
Mr D. Millichap	Sir Alexander Graham
J.W. and L. Hanbury-Tennison	
R.E. Brook Charitable Settlement	

Gifts of £100 or more:

Mr Stephen Conrad	Roddy Pryor
Miss P.M. Ward	Mr Harry Matthews

Mr R. Venables	Prof. Tim Congdon
Mr D.C. Potter	John Alexander
Mr C.H. McCall	Ms N. Anderson
Mr and Mrs G. Bland	P.N. Thornton
Mr D.G.E. Hilton	Mr L.D.J. Henderson
Mr C.K. Stratton-Browne	Mr John Rhodes
Mr J.S. Haw	Mr C. Murray Adams
BPRI	The Sainer Charity
McCorquodale Charitable Trust	

Gifts of £500 or more:

Singer & Friedlander
Herbert Smith Solicitors
Morgan Grenfell Group
Mr J.P. Lewis
Mr A.M.D. Willis
Peter Beckwith
Touche Ross

N.B. Some donations by covenant and those very recently received are not shown here but will be acknowledged in the next issue of **Columns**

Eleanor Murray retires

Eleanor Murray, who has chaired the Friends for over a decade, retired in January. Her commitment to the restoration of Christ Church has been heartfelt.

Formerly Secretary of the Georgian Group, and a champion of architectural conservation issues, in recognition of which she was awarded the MBE, Eleanor 'retired' and immediately took on chairmanship of the Friends. She has seen the charity through many difficult negotiations, and both initiated and raised the funds for the archaeological excavation of the crypt burials. Although unseen by most visitors to Christ Church, this four-year, £200,000 project has been internationally acclaimed for its blend of the skills of archaeologists with palaeontologists and social anthropologists. Eleanor has now actually retired to spend more time in her native Scotland and to further develop her fine book-binding skills.

She has been succeeded as Chairman by Eric Elstob, Trustee since the foundation of the Friends, who lives in the shadow of Christ Church. Paying tribute to his predecessor, Eric Elstob said 'The restoration of Christ Church owes an immense amount to Eleanor's hard work and patience.'

Open Days

Following the success of Christ Church's participation in the London-wide Open House Day last September, with over 350 visitors in just two days, the Friends are arranging Open Days at weekends, when the church is usually closed outside Sunday service times. Christ Church will be open to the public on the fourth Sunday of every month, between 1pm and 4pm. It is hoped that some of the people who visit stalls in Old Spitalfields Vegetable Market opposite will visit.

Forthcoming dates are:

24 March 28 April
26 May 23 June

Hawksmoor portrait

Black and white postcards of the Cheere portrait bust of Nicholas Hawksmoor, at All Souls College, Oxford, where he did some of his best-known work, are now available. The bust is the architect's only known life portrait, and was photographed for the Friends by Lucinda Douglas-Menzies, by kind permission of All Souls. Cards are £1 for 4, including postage, from the Friends.

Kossoff show

The Tate Gallery will be holding an exhibition of works by Leon Kossoff 6 June-1 September 1996. A whole room will be devoted to his powerful paintings of Christ Church, many of which formed the British entry at the 1995 Venice Biennale. Kossoff was born in Spitalfields to Jewish parents and has had a lifelong fascination with Hawksmoor's church. The Friends have produced a new postcard of Kossoff's 1990 painting *Christ Church Spitalfields, Morning*, by kind permission of the artist and the Tate Gallery, its owners. The postcards cost £1 for 4, including postage from the Friends.

The interview with Lady Kennet in Columns 3 was not checked with her and contained some errors which the Friends deeply regret.

Christ Church goes to Hollywood

The new feature film by Oscar-winning British director Stephen Frears contains scenes shot in Christ Church. The film, *Mary Reilly*, is a re-working of the Jekyll & Hyde story and is due for release this autumn. The set builders did such a good job disguising the church it is doubtful whether those seeing the film will recognise it! Tony Palmer's *England, My England*, shown on Channel 4 on Christmas Day as the network's principal contribution to the Purcell tercentenary year, and starring Simon Callow, also featured Christ Church as a location. It stood in, rather improbably, for Westminster Abbey, where Purcell was organist. Money earned by the parish from location fees from films such as these is allocated towards maintenance of the building.

Magpie Books

Magpie Bookshop in Brushfield Street, opposite Christ Church, stocks both a range of postcards of the church and the two volumes of the Council for British Archaeology's study of the excavations of the crypt burials (at £24 each volume). The shop is open 7 days a week, at 53 Brushfield Street, E1. Telephone 0171-247 4263.

Thank You

The campaign to restore Christ Church relies on the support of many people. Recently we have had cause to thank:

- Arthur Andersen Foundation who have sponsored the Friends' benefit concert on June 19th - see back page - so that every penny from ticket sales will go to restoration funds.
- Bronwyn Price, John Bunney, Christopher Woodward, Fiona Ligonnet, and Anne Jamieson - all volunteers at the Friends' office up in the tower of Christ Church.
- Bankers Trust for photocopying this bulletin

We need volunteers to help in the appeal office during the week. Please telephone Roland Jeffery or Kevin Skelding at the Friends' office if you would like to know more

Personal Column

Isobel Barker

*Born in Spitalfields before the First World War, and living in the area ever since, Isobel Barker recalls for **Columns** Christ Church and Spitalfields in earlier days.*

I was born in the Tenter Ground [now the site of the 1930s Holland estate], known as the Dutch Tenter because there were so many Jews of Dutch origins living there. My family were Christians, but we always got on so well with the Jews — wonderful people they were. We had a dairy. The cows came in by train from Essex to Liverpool Street, and we kept them while they were in milk. Then they went to the butchers. The children would buy a cake at Oswins the baker around the corner and then come and buy milk from us.

At Christ Church, I have known eight rectors. Mr Bartle came as a curate. He was terrified when he went visiting in Dorset Street [off Petticoat Lane, now demolished]. The children in the flats had broken all the banisters off the stairs for firewood so you had to be careful. I was confirmed by Mr Chard [Rector 1909-25]. He got pneumonia shortly afterwards and died. In his days there were proper pews, and a vergier who led in the choir, and we always referred to the altar. In 1926 Revd Colin Caustin Kerr came, and he was really evangelical. We lost all the trimmings, as he called it. He started a movement called the Campaigners, as a result of a vision he had. They had a special salute, and all the boys in the Campaigners wore kilts & tammies! — army surplus he had bought after the First World War. It was a time then when a clergyman's word went a long way: he managed to get jobs for so many young men, and he did a lot of good around here in the 30s.

In the second war, the crypt was used as an air-raid shelter, but I was evacuated to Thaxted, Essex. The Vicar there was Conrad Noel; they used to call him the Red Vicar because he once flew a red flag on the church.

My brother-in-law was organist in the 1930s. The last time I heard the organ play at Christ Church was in 1957. That was when they closed the church. There was a prayer meeting on the Thursday, when the Bishop of Stepney came. It was closed by the Sunday. The old boy who always came and checked it over wasn't there. It was a younger surveyor who closed it — the same one who closed St Luke's Old Street [by Hawksmoor and John James, now derelict]. The Area Dean came along too, and they talked about us going to another church but we had a good Church Council and they stood up for us.

Forthcoming Events

Hawksmoor Churches Bus Tour

Following the sell-out tour last year, when two double decker buses filled with enthusiasts saw all six of Hawksmoor's London churches, we are repeating the tour on **Saturday 18 May** starting in central London at 9.30 am. The cost is £30 (£22.50 to Friends who have contributed £15 or more to the Appeal this past year). The price includes a sandwich lunch in a riverside pub, a seat on the bus, notes on the churches, and donations to churches visited. As on the previous tour, our distinguished guide will be Donald Findlay, Deputy Secretary of the Council for the Care of Churches and a leading authority on Georgian church architecture.

Please send cheques payable to 'The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields' or 'FOCCS' with your booking. Places will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, are limited to two per application, and are expected to sell briskly.

Royal Gala Benefit concert

The legendary Dutch harpsichordist and interpreter of JS Bach, Gustav Leonhardt, has most generously agreed to perform a benefit concert in aid of the Friends' appeal for restoration funds, on **Wednesday 19 June 1996 at 7.30pm**. The concert will be in the presence of HRH The Duke of Gloucester. Tickets are £10 to £25. Phone 0171-377-1362 - and not the Friends office - from 29th April to book.

The dates for the **1996 Spitalfields Festival** are **5-26 June**, with several of the concerts focusing on JS Bach and early music. Phone for a diary of concerts.

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