

Columns

NUMBER 13 • DECEMBER 1999

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 0171-247 0165.

Phase 3 of the restoration begins

Work began on 8th November on the first part of the third phase of the restoration: the building of the structures for the reinstatement of the aisle galleries, and the cleaning and restoration of the north elevation along with essential repairs to the parapets.

Until now no major repairs have been carried out to the north elevation, with the exception of the area at the west end which was restored between 1996 and 1998 when the works to the spire and tower were completed. The parapet, sections of the cornice and the ashlar at high level are in poor condition: the mouldings to the coping are badly weathered and fractured in places; the pointing is in poor condition and missing in some places and badly cracked or displaced by movement or frost action. It is also likely that there are some stones which are very thin and which will have to be replaced and the brick core to the wall may also be in poor condition and have to be rebuilt.

With a building of such an age and size as Christ Church the true scale of the job only becomes known after the work has been started. Restoration often starts with extensive archaeological investigation. In the case of the repairs to the north elevation and its parapets this is to find out how much cleaning and restoration must be carried out. The deposits of soot on the walls are up to half an inch thick and it is therefore impossible to see what repairs may be needed.

In the case of the galleries, the archaeological investigation, which has been in progress for a long time and is now reaching its conclusion, is to ascertain what had been built originally. The wall plaster has been stripped back to the brick work to find the exact heights and positions of the holes for joists and beams and one can see the hooks, many of them labelled, on which the gallery panels were hung. The galleries were removed in 1866 and their rebuilding will enable visitors to Christ Church to see Hawksmoor's spatial intentions for the interior for the first time since then.

Following extensive research by the architect the gallery structures will be rebuilt using materi-



Drawing of unknown provenance showing the interior of Christ Church before the galleries were removed. The original caption reads:

Christ Church Spitalfields

This view is dedicated to Robert Hanbury, Esq; Mr P. Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq; the Patrons, and to the Rev. John Patteson, M.A. the Rector, by Andrew Trimen, Architect, Adelphi.

This Church is little known to the Profession or to the Public of the present Century. Hence this publication.

The Interior is perhaps the finest in its proportions, and general character of any Church in England. It was designed by Hawksmoor, a Pupil of Wren.

als and methods very similar to their originals. Wherever possible surviving eighteenth century timbers from Christ Church will be used. A number of beams, particularly at the west end of the church survive in their original positions. However, when the galleries were removed in 1866 and those at the west end lowered to their present position, the cross beams were no longer laid on top of the main beams but were jointed together. The evidence for this can be seen in the beams that are running east-west on either side of the organ. The model of Christ Church, which shows the different stages of modification and which is normally on display in the West vestibule, is illuminating on this point.

The works on the structures will begin with the dismantling and investigation of the present galleries; this will be done by Luard Conservation. The main contractors for the Phase 3 works are once more Harry Neal (City) Ltd. who did the cleaning and restoration of the south elevation and the construction of the south steps. The architects for the whole restoration project are Whitfield Partners. The engineers are Hockley and Dawson and the quantity surveyors Cook and Butler.

The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields are grateful to their major funders: The Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and the Monument Trust for their continued support. We are also grateful to our many supporters, both individual and corporate enabling us to continue the restoration. In order to continue and complete the restoration, however, we must raise the matching funds to our grants. We need to raise a further £1.5 million to finish the job which is a challenging task and we appeal to the generosity of our supporters who share our vision of a restored Christ Church. Please help us!

There are many specific items for which we require funding. There are also many tax advantageous ways of supporting us. For details of different projects to fund and ways of giving please contact the Friends' Office.

Michael Gillingham CBE FSA

1933 1999

Few more colourful characters can have emerged from the exclusive Plymouth Brethren than Michael Gillingham. Though his interests led him into the deepest corners of more than one specialist field, his life and conversation revolved around people. At home, he would gleefully recount the adventures of his friends, a whisky in his hand, his eyes bulging with surprise at any more outlandish exploit, and using his talent as a mimic to hilarious effect. As well as his knowledge of goings-on in the Church of England, he would also bring news of those who he regarded as 'Church-Minded' and note with approval that so-and-so was 'a Good Georgian'.

In those two favourite phrases he might have been describing himself: the Barchester novels contain nothing to match the vivid character whose kindness, wisdom, intelligence and knowledge spoke of a gentlemanly and leisured world now long gone.

Born in Yeovil in 1933, he was encouraged in an early appreciation of history and music. He was inquisitive and precociously intelligent. He won a scholarship to Yeovil School, where his



teachers recognised his ability and pushed him forward.

As a schoolboy he developed his interests in antiques, churches and music.

The two latter were combined in playing the organ, but as the Plymouth Brethren frowned on music as a pastime, he kept organ music at school, where he learnt it by heart, and then practised in churches he visited on his way home. Thus were the major works of Bach and Mendelssohn stored for future use.

A double scholarship to Cambridge followed, and he went up to Corpus at seventeen to read History and Law. Garth Moore was his tutor and in due course a close friend, demonstrating by example the possibilities of faith with freedom that were to play such an important part in Michael's later life.

After experience in the law and banking Michael found a home in the fine art world with Spinks, who were also Brethren. As a director of John Sparks in Mount Street from 1976–91 he found his professional niche, building up an impressive connection in the world of Oriental art and antiques.

Meanwhile he had become a member of the Church of England, which allowed him to explore its rich treasury of buildings and their contents. In 1968 he advised on the restoration of the seventeenth century organ at Framlingham, and this marked the start of a fruitful involvement with organs all over Britain. His hand may be detected in the organs at Peterborough Cathedral, Chichester Cathedral, St. James Clerkenwell, St. Matthew Westminster, St. Andrew Holborn

and at his old college in Cambridge. He was the founding Chairman of the British Institute of Organ Studies.

Living in Clerkenwell in the 1970s, he became acquainted with the late Donald Findlay. They were delighted to find that they had so many interests in common, and set up household together. In 1979 they acquired the magnificent house in Fournier Street, Spitalfields where they entertained their friends for many years. Michael's hospitality was inexhaustible. All guests sat as equals at a groaning table; it was unthinkable to telephone without a choice of free evenings to suggest; Michael cooked with improvisatory flourishes and second helpings were irresistible.

The restoration of the house went on, but Michael remained devoted to work for ecclesiastical committees, and he was awarded a CBE in 1997. He was closely involved with the restoration of Christ Church Spitalfields: in the 'sixties he was the last person to play its eighteenth century organ while it was still in working order and he would speak with keen anticipation of the day when the restored organ might be heard again.

Donald Findlay died of cancer at Easter 1998, a blow from which it was difficult for Michael to recover. He made a tremendous effort but life was not quite the same. He died on Friday 22 October 1999 after suffering an aneurysm. A memorial service will be held at midday on Friday 28 January 2000 at the Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street.

Stephen Bicknell

Eric Elstob writes:

I write with sorrow to tell you that Michael Gillingham, one of our longest serving trustees, died unexpectedly and suddenly in late October. We were having a neighbourly drink together in his Spitalfields sitting room, Michael sparking with impish humour; and within hours he suffered a series of heart attacks, and never regained consciousness.

The Parish, the Friends and the local community have each suffered an immense loss. For the Parish and the Friends it is Michael's experience and influence which we shall miss so badly. His long years of lay service within the Church of England meant that we could turn to him on any matter, from faculties to fund raising, and know that his help would be generously and wisely given.

It will be hard to imagine a Spitalfields without Michael who moved here in 1979, a pioneer from the epic days of the regeneration of the area, with empty and abandoned old houses, drunks

and prostitutes in every doorway, whom Michael treated with unfailing courtesy.

He and the church historian Donald Findlay restored one of the finest private houses in London, just next to Christ Church, transforming it from a slum into, often literally, a film set. I remember one day finding a pretty girl sitting on the stairs there, who turned out to be Natasha Kinsky. They destroyed the derelict factory at the rear of the house, and made a delightful urban garden, which already seems mature.

For almost twenty years Michael played the hymns at Christ Church on high days and holidays, latterly on the chamber organ which he had restored for us. Because he was so modest few realise how great was his work for the restoration. I remember his delight, as a practising Christian, when the works carried out by the Friends made it possible for the Parish to move back into the church in 1986.

Many of you will remember him warmly as an excellent lecturer on this great building, as his fellow trustees will remember him affectionately for his knowledge and his integrity. His memorial ought to be the glorious organ of Christ Church, which he sadly did not live to play. Last year after Donald Findlay's death we started a specific organ appeal fund; and we can be confident that Michael could wish no better farewell than gifts towards it.

Recently published

ENGLAND'S THOUSAND BEST CHURCHES
by Simon Jenkins
Allen Lane The Penguin Press
Hardback £25.00

A fully illustrated ecclesiastical 'Michelin Guide', ranking churches between one and five stars. With only eighteen churches being awarded five stars in total, competition was fierce, and the selection process strict! No London church makes the top rating but Christ Church Spitalfields is awarded four stars and is ranked in the top hundred.

Simon Jenkins, a former editor of *The Times*, has been deputy chairman of English Heritage and is currently a member of the Millennium Commission. He now chairs the Buildings Books Trust, and writes for *The Times*, the *London Evening Standard* and *Country Life*.

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 £10 donated to the Restoration Appeal we can draw down a further £30 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 various ways: banker's cheque, CAF cheque, banker's order, or deed of covenant with banker's order; by filling in the appropriate part of the form to the right or below:

I enclose my cheque for:

£20 £25 £50 £250* other

towards the restoration of Christ Church Spitalfields

towards the restoration of the Richard Bridge Organ

*amounts over £250 enable us to reclaim back tax from the Inland Revenue through Gift Aid

Name.....

Address

.....

.....

Postcode

Tel no

To help us plan with more certainty and to keep down our administrative costs please support us by **Banker's Order**.

If you are a taxpayer, making a **Deed of Covenant** can further increase your gift. We can reclaim from the Inland Revenue the tax already paid by you.

Please return this form to us. We will process it and forward it to your bank.

Thank you. Please return the completed page to:

FOCCS, FREEPOST, LONDON E1 6BR

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

Deed of Covenant

To: The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields.

I promise to pay you each year during my lifetime starting today, such a sum as after deduction of Income Tax at the basic rate amounts to £..... (insert amount) per annum provided that I may revoke in writing this deed of covenant at any time after the expiry of four years from today.

Signed and delivered by

.....

Date.....

Name

Address.....

..... Postcode

Signed in the presence of

..... Signature

Witness name and address:.....

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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.

Gifts of £1000

Alan & Mary Gibbins

(for the Richard Bridge Organ Appeal Fund)

Jeremy Hill

Brian D Smith

Gifts of £350

Mrs P Pinder

Gifts of £250

Arthur Anderson Foundation

Clifford Chance

Linklater & Paines

Gifts of £200

Mrs A M Fraser

Richard Greer

Gifts of £100

N Assheton

Dr Anne Hogg

M Byrne

W O Clarke

Geoffrey Collens

W T J Griffin

Sir Peter Leslie

D A Lester

Andrew Soundy

Alan & Lyn Williams

Open House '99

Supporters may remember reading about the successful Open House weekend in 1998. This year's weekend in September surpassed all expectations. A steady stream of genuinely interested visitors meant that we were able to publicise widely the work of the Restoration as well as that of the Festival and the Parish to an already receptive audience.

Throughout the weekend there were short talks about the building and its restoration given by Trustees of the Friends. Visitors were able to visit the Old Vestry Room, which is not normally open to the public and to walk out through the south door and down the new steps.

Some facts and figures:
We had over 2,100 visitors (up 1,000 on last year).

Postcards and Christmas cards were on sale in the Old Vestry Room and teas and home-made cakes could be bought downstairs in the church. Our costs were very low thanks to generous help and donations in kind so we made a surplus of £1,720 for the one and a half days.

With the numbers of people that Open House attracts we would be unable to make this event such a success without the help of all our volunteers who gave up their time to help. Thank you.

Dates for your diary: next year's Open House will be 23 and 24 September 2000. Please make a note of these dates and ring the office if you think you can help.

Opening hours at Christ Church

During the next phase of the restoration, while the structures to the galleries are being built, it is not possible to open Christ Church to visitors during the weekday lunchtimes.

Christmas services at Christ Church

Sunday Dec 12 and 19

1-5pm: 'Now is the Time', coffee & carols in Christ Church

Thursday Dec 16

5pm: Community Carol Service (organised by Spitalfields Community Trust, Spitalfields Festival and Christ Church)

Sunday Dec 19

6.30pm: Carols by Candlelight

Christmas Eve

11.30pm: Midnight Communion (ASB)

Christmas Day

9.30am: Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

10.30am: Christmas Family Celebration (45 mins)

Bring your favourite present so far!

Sunday Dec 26

10.30am: Worship for St. Stephen's Day

Services in the New Year

The church will be open from the New Year on Sundays for services 10.30am-1pm.

Spitalfields Winter Festival

This year's Festival is from 13 to 22 December. For information telephone the Festival Hotline: 0171-377 1362.

The Friends' Millennium Quiz

Test your knowledge of Hawksmoor and Christ Church and have the chance to win a bottle of champagne*. Answer as many of these questions as you can:

1. How many 'Fifty New Churches' are there?
2. How many architects were involved in the design of these churches?
3. When was the foundation stone of Christ Church, Spitalfields laid?
4. What is missing from the spire?
5. Who designed the organ?
6. When were the clock dials first illuminated with gas lighting?
7. Where was the clock before 1822?
8. What were the two cataclysmic events which happened to Christ Church in the first half of the nineteenth century?
9. What is the name of the Victorian architect who removed the galleries?
10. When were the steps on the south side removed?
11. In what modern novel does Christ Church feature and who wrote it?
12. What was the name of Fournier Street in the eighteenth century?
13. Where did the memorials in the vestibule, at the west end of the church, come from?
14. What was the name given to the churchyard in the first two decades of this century?
15. When was the south door re-opened?
16. Where was the fire engine shed located in the eighteenth century?
17. How many bells are there?
18. Name the 'order', or style, of the capitals of the columns in Christ Church
19. The Clarendon Building at Oxford was designed by Hawksmoor and Townesend to accommodate what sort of machinery?
20. Where is Hawksmoor buried?

Write your answers in this column:

1.
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The winner will be the first most correct answer drawn out of a hat on Wednesday 19 January 2000. We shall publish the name of the winner in the next issue of *Columns*.

*For those who prefer it, there is an alternative prize of a limited edition Hugh Casson print of Christ Church.

Please print:

Name

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Tel no.....

Please return this page to:
 Millennium Quiz, FOCCS, Christ Church,
 Fournier Street, London E1 6QE.

Proposed visit to Castle Howard

The Friends are hoping to arrange a visit to Castle Howard in Yorkshire in mid June 2000. We will be able to visit the Mausoleum designed by Hawksmoor as the burial place of Charles Howard, third Earl of Carlisle.

For many years the Mausoleum was in a dangerous state and could not be visited. Consolidation work has recently been completed and it is now possible by special arrangement for groups to approach the building and visit its interior.

Our proposed tour will also visit the house and other monuments by Hawksmoor in the park. An expert guide will accompany us and we will be travelling on a group ticket by train from King's Cross. At York we will be met by a coach which will take us to the house. We will return to London the same day.

Places will be limited to a maximum of 35 and we would be grateful if you could express your initial interest by sending us a post card to the Friends' office.



The Mausoleum on its lonely hill is [Hawksmoor's] greatest achievement. It is one of the last Baroque buildings in the freedom of its sources and the intensity of its direct assault on the emotions. But its geometrical simplicity and its sombre severity look forward to the age of neo-classicism. And the strangeness ... of many of Hawksmoor's formal devices, has found recognition only in the present century's exploration of the subconscious. Ultimately, the quality and character of his work cannot be put into prose. Its language is the one he knew best and knew as few other English architects have known: the eloquence of stone.

Kerry Downes: Hawksmoor, 1969

Fundraising success at concert in aid of the Restoration Appeal

The Friends raised over £8,500 for the Restoration Appeal as a result of a concert given during this year's summer music festival.

The concert was given by the tenor Philip Langridge, his daughter the cellist Jennifer Langridge and the pianist David Owen Norris. The programme was broadly based and immensely enjoyable with songs ranging from the 16th century composer Giulio Caccini to Richard Rodney Bennett, taking in works by Schubert, Liszt and Britten on the way.

Supporters were given the opportunity to have a glass of champagne at a pre-concert reception in one of the beautiful early eighteenth-century silk weavers' houses nearby and then return to enjoy a buffet supper after the concert.

The Friends would like to thank their major sponsors for this event, INVESCO Asset Management, and also to thank the Arthur Andersen Foundation and Mr Brian Smith, retired partner of Arthur Andersen, for their generous contributions in connection with this fund-raising concert. We would also like to thank the Spitalfields Festival for their exemplary organisation without which the concert could not have taken place.

Wanted

Postage If your company can assist by providing occasional postage facilities, please let us know.

Press cuttings We cannot afford to retain a press cuttings agency, so we rely on our Supporters to send us press and magazine articles. Anything about Hawksmoor and his buildings and, of course, about Christ Church itself, is of great interest. Please make sure to put the date and name of the publication on the cutting.

Volunteers We are looking for volunteers to help us in the office during the day for either secretarial or more menial tasks.

If you think you could help, please telephone the Friends: 0171-247 0165.

Personal column

Andrew Cartwright

I have to admit that it was partly out of self-interest that ABN AMRO decided to help pay for the restoration of the clock on the tower of Christ Church Spitalfields.

The church is splendidly visible from the new office building we moved into over the last months on the Spitalfields side of Bishopsgate, to the extent that an inaccurate clock could have given a whole new source of excuses for delinquency in the bank! We are eagerly looking forward to seeing the hands move forward from the fixed position of noon at which they are currently set.

Our new building, in grey steel and glass, is in complete contrast to Hawksmoor's classical stone, but there is a striking similarity in the clarity of the design of both buildings. There is real pleasure in looking out of the window to see the 'incorrect' classical details in Hawksmoor's design and to see how he adapted the traditional classical models in which he was clearly so well versed into new designs.

As a bank, we are taking an active interest in the new community we have joined this year. In addition to financial support, we have been able to help the Friends in practical ways with equipment and help in the production of newsletters, and we look forward to continuing to do this. We also look out to play a part in helping others in the area.

In the last weeks it has been a pleasure and a surprise for many of us to discover the richness and unexpected detail of the Spitalfields area. Many people do not get a lot further than the 'international' eating experiences in the old Market, but even that is an eye-opener in a conventional office day.

Seeing Hawksmoor's facade each day is an encouragement to look freshly at the buildings around us. The variety in Spitalfields is always a surprise!

My personal interest in Christ Church and Hawksmoor nearly overstretched family relations. For domestic reasons, we found ourselves taking our youngest daughter on Roland Jeffery's excellent bus tour of the London churches last year. At one point near Greenwich, she was heard to say loudly that this was 'the worst day of her life'. But she remembered the church positively when we came to look at the new office and its neighbours last month. And I do not think she much upset the older travellers.

There is a tremendous richness and variety in the area, which makes for a more interesting neighbourhood than most office locations. It sometimes feels a little pioneering, but the variety of communities which have prospered in Spitalfields is very striking! We are looking

forward to being good neighbours, and to seeing the church clock come back to life in the next weeks.

Andrew Cartwright is Managing Director of ABN AMRO.

Mailing list

The Friends are transferring their mailing list to a new data base system *AppealMaster*. We have high hopes that this will help us to greater efficiencies in the office. Inevitably there are some teething problems with such a change, so do please bear with us. However, you can help by letting us know if we have any of your details wrong. Please send any corrections or amendments to the Friends' office.

Thank you

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

ABN AMRO

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, Herbert Smith, Vail Printers, Spitalfields Development Group, Gooch & Webster.

Hugo Glendinning for photographing Ricardo Cinalli's painting of Christ Church which has been used as the Friends' Christmas card.

We would like to thank Bob Dickinson, Ceri George, Peter Lerwill, Fiona Ligonnet, Eva-Lena Ruhnbro, Kay Sinden, Wendy Smith and Christopher Woodward for helping both in the office and at special events.

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