

Columns

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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 coupon in this issue to make a donation, or telephone the Friends' office on 020 7247 0165.

Half way to completion

Readers of *Columns* will be delighted to learn that the repair of the external stonework is nearly complete, and the scaffolding has been struck. The restoration of Christ Church has reached half way.

This is the culmination of the work of four years that began in earnest in 1996 with the consolidation and cleaning of the tower and spire. The south façade was cleaned and repaired in 1999 and at the same time the double flight of Portland stone steps to the south door was rebuilt. Repairing and cleaning the north façade started in 1999 and finished earlier this year.

This summer the restoration moved on to the final stages of the external stonework: the cleaning and repair of the east elevation, repairs to the external east window and repairs to the parapets on top of the clerestory. The parapets were originally built of a 'sandwich' of stone facings with a core of

rubble between them, but they have been rebuilt in solid stone. Although the parapets are almost invisible from the ground and can only be seen from a distance, the work was essential but also extremely expensive. The contract sum for these last works was just over £1/2 million, half provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the other half by the Friends' Supporters.

By this winter the whole exterior of the church should finally be proof against wind and weather for the next three hundred years. The completion of the repairs to the external stonework is the first milestone in the restoration programme and the Friends and their Supporters have reason to be proud.

The second milestone will be the completion of the galleries, floor and decoration of the interior. This will be followed by the re-installment of Richard Bridge's magnificent organ.



Late seventeenth century carved stone, carved with wreaths and swags, discovered while repairing the parapets. When the old parapets were dismantled a number of carved stones were discovered: the carved stones pictured were buried inside the wall and their presence was not suspected until the wall was dismantled. It is possible that they predate the church

and may have been built into the wall by Hawksmoor's masons when the church was first built or during repairs in the nineteenth century. The style of the carving suggests that these stones are about forty or fifty years older than Christ Church and probably come from one of the parishes merged with Christ Church.

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 lectures and other special events that the Friends organise.

Your gift will be matched by Lottery funding at a ratio of 1 to 3. £20 donated to the Appeal enables the Friends to do £80 of restoration work. In addition, if you are a UK taxpayer, we can now claim a further 28p for every pound you give us. Please sign the declaration below.

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.....

to _____ :

The Richard Bridge Organ

I would like the Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields to reclaim tax on any donations that I make. I have paid an amount of UK income tax or capital gains tax equal to any tax reclaimed.

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

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Name _____

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Thank you. Please return the completed page to:
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To: _____ Bank
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Please pay to the Royal Bank of Scotland plc of 67 Lombard St, London 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.

**delete as applicable*

Signature _____

Name (print) _____

Date _____

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

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. We would like to thank the following for their recent donations, and those who prefer to remain anonymous.

Gift of \$50,000

an anonymous donation from one of
Michael Gillingham's friends in New York

Gift of £2,000

Foreign & Colonial Eurotrust

Gifts of £1,000

Ashurst Morris Crisp
Brook Charitable Trust
Cazenove Charitable Trust
Foreign & Colonial Management
Henderson Smaller Co.
The Gumby Corporation
Hammerson plc
George Law
G Walton

Gifts of between £500 and £1,000

H Parker
The Girdlers Company
Home & Abroad Inc
A G Murray Jones
Lovells
Baring Asset Management
H S Barlow

Gifts of between £250 and £500

Eleanor Murray
G Collens
In memory of David Lyle and Sandy Edwards
Mr & Mrs P R Smith
Mrs P H Pinder
S Pricket
Simon J Mosley
Sir Peter Cazalet
Sir Walker Carter Charitable Trust
Laing & Cruickshank Investment Management

Gifts of between £100 and £200

Andrew Barker
Mary Fraser
Mrs A M Foster
Mrs Lesley Lewis
T G Barker
The Lesley David Trust
P de Fritaes
Inscape
Alexander Ratensky

Gifts of between £50 and £100

All Souls College
The W&E Charitable Trust
Mrs Y R Cheetham
James Nelson
Andrew J Soundy
Bryan Sutton
Glossop Pryor Foundation
J M Bartos
J S and H L Haw
K J Salway
K A Hogg
Lawrence Hurst
Peter Ellis
Mrs A Fraser
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R C Lewis
David Sylvester
J Stratford
Richmond Decorative & Fine Arts Society
The Archbishops Council
M A Evans
A K F Butterfield
Britannia Building Society
C R Richards
C P Claxton Stevens
Cynthia Butterworth
D Aspinall
D Pears
Damien Vaughn
D E Dolby
D W Lane
E Robins
Eleanor Murray
James Ross
Jon Livingston
L Hurst
L P Heller
Michael & Penelope Crawford
Michael & Wendy Smith
Miss B J Cadbury
M L Gorden
Mr & Mrs Richards
Mr A Heslop
Mr and Mrs Dufty
Mr and Mrs J A Lumley
James M Ross
Mrs Chalker
Mrs J N Pelissier
Ms A M R Hobson
Ms A Maddock
Professor P C Wilkinson
Ray Hurst
S P Datta
Julian Glover
Mrs R Legge



Hugo Glendinning

Restoring the crypt

The first step has been taken in the restoration of the crypt at Christ Church; and on the 31st August the Bishop of Stepney dedicated the chapel at the west end of the crypt in a moving service, so that the old vaults, after almost three hundred years of the silence of the grave, rang with hymns. The acoustics are thunderous!

The incentive to start on the crypt now was the relaying of the floor in the church and the installation of new central heating, both planned for the second half of next year. Obviously it would be unsatisfactory for the Parish to try to worship in the building site in the nave; and it was not possible for them to use the parish hall instead, so a new space had to be found. Although the crypt is not included in the current phase of restoration, and therefore receives no grants from English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund, the trustees decided to spend £30,000 of the Friends' funds to make the crypt chapel. We are also very grateful to the Jerusalem Trust and to a parishioner for further substantial gifts towards the work.

The result is a most handsome space, which will be a real asset both to the parish and to the other users of Christ Church, and a good advertisement when we start to raise money for the complete redevelopment of the crypt. The great brick vaults of the ceiling are carried on massive Portland stone piers with a fine apse at the west end for a font. The atmosphere is Roman; and once again

one must marvel at Hawksmoor's genius that designed an area never intended to be seen as a great work of art.

Hugo Glendinning's photograph shows how fine the crypt is; and we hope to have it open to the public soon.



Red Mason

Repairs in progress to the entablature on the south side of the east window.

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:

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

We are also grateful for help in kind from: **Herbert Smith and Linklaters & Alliance; Bowne of London** for printing the Friends' new supporters' leaflet; **Libby Spurrier** for allowing us to use Charles Maude's photographs of Christ Church.

Thank you also to: **Malcolm Graham** for buying our new website address; **Lucinda Douglas-Menzies** for the photograph of the detail from the organ case for this year's Christmas card; **Hugo Glendinning** for the photograph of the crypt.

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.

Back up support

The Friends Office is run with a small number of staff in order to keep our overhead costs to a minimum. We always welcome the following help:

Volunteers

We need volunteers for work in the office, which might include help with the mailings, and also at our special events. We are looking for volunteers to help at the Spitalfields Winter Festival 14–22 December. This will be to hand out information about the restoration and to sell Christmas cards. You will be fully briefed and will have the opportunity to hear the concert. 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.

Postage

If you or your business could help with postage facilities this would help enormously with our mailings.

Office Equipment

The Friends particularly need computer equipment and postage weighing scales (electronic or manual)

If you can help, please contact the Friends office: 020 7247 0165.

The Market Café

The Market Café has finally closed – with a moving farewell on the menu blackboard:

‘We hate goodbyes, so to save too many tears we have slipped out the back way to melt into the shadows.

This is a very sad time for us. It has been great knowing you all and a pleasure serving you.

Now the Market Caff is no more

Farewell, Clyde

The End’

G.B.Hazlitt writes: London sleeps. Now is the important time. There is work to be done. We dream. But babies are born; lives draw to a close; the cycle of prayer enfolds us; Phyllis and Clyde light the gas and allow the brew to begin.

The passing of the Market Café is like a rite of passage in the life of Spitalfields. Now the world will have a new division: those who never passed through that ply door and sat on those singular chairs. Do you remember how proud you were when Phyllis told you to go into the kitchen and order what you wanted from Clyde? Now you were no longer a visitor. How presumptuous were those who descended those steps and passed through the vestige of a courtyard uninvited. But no, this fellowship was generously given. Its only test a courteous ‘Good morning’, and a care to observe the convention that one o’clock was late for lunch.

Lunch? Pork belly, roast lamb, roast beef, toad-in-the-hole. And proper vegetables: cabbage, sprouts, carrots and potatoes, boiled or roast. Oh, and ‘A bit of Yorkshire pudding?’ That would go with anything. And pudding. Ah! Pudding. Apple pie and jam roly-poly all with custard (the Yorkshire of the desert course).

And tea. The tea of ages. Pope noted that ‘Great Anna, whom three realms obey, did sometimes council take and sometimes tea.’ This was the tea. So nonchalant seemed Phyllis’ infusing, but here was stiffening of backbone, courage for the weak, council in an aged cup.

But I am grateful for more than lunch. This was the place where one could rise at 3 o’clock and escape the nightly fears and fantasies. The conversation of cabbies and Underground workers was a rare comfort for a sleepless night. That tea and marmalade toast its accompaniment. Here Phyllis and Clyde worked a kindness and a salve to the troubled soul.

Personal column

The Friends arranged a successful visit to the Mausoleum at Castle Howard in June. Ann Pembroke has contributed her enthusiastic account of the day:

The general public would not necessarily associate Castle Howard with Nicholas Hawksmoor but rather with the grand personality of the late George Howard or with a certain Teddy Bear who achieved TV fame. However, the mausoleum set in the grounds of the Howard family is a fascinating example of Hawksmoor's work.

The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields met at Kings Cross on 15th June to travel north to York. Within two hours the journey was accomplished and a luxury coach drove us through the Plain of York on to rising open moorland where the first stone gateway in a castellated wall marks the entrance to the Castle Howard estate. The drive continued until we reached another stone arch before entering the main grounds.

We were met by Andrew Martindale who guided the party past the long frontage of Castle Howard, restored from fire damage, and along the broad grass walk towards the Temple of the Four Winds. The grass walk is elevated and lined with statues of Roman and Greek mythology executed in the eighteenth century by various tinsplate workers of the City of London. On their plinths the statues stand some ten feet high and are most impressive. Below the rhododendrons bloomed.

It was a steady up-hill climb to the Mausoleum, which is set far apart from the main complex of buildings. The Castle Howard estate is worked by the family as a farm. We passed tractors and bales on the rough hillside as we approached this magnificent building. The Mausoleum is not open to the general public on safety grounds but, with the kind permission of the Hon. Simon Howard, the Friends, wearing hard hats, were fortunate to be allowed up the staircases into the locked upper circular chamber. The area of ground towards the retaining wall is rough, afflicted with stinging nettles up to the rusting locked iron gates. Through the gates, rabbits were playing in the coarse grass. The balustrade of the stone staircase has fallen away and pieces are stacked against the wall awaiting restoration. We were warned to be very careful mounting the stairs and told not to hang on to masonry! The view of the main house from the top appears unaltered since the early eighteenth century. It is truly breathtaking.

The circular stone walled room has the bust of an angel over the entrance door, but otherwise no Christian symbols. A plain altar is sited on the wall opposite the door. What appear to be blocked-up

long windows were never, in fact, windows. Light enters small windows high up around the domed ceiling. Outside the entrance to the tomb chamber descends down green, slimy steps to another locked door. Within there is no natural light and it takes a minute or two to adjust to the gloom. One of our party had shown initiative by bringing a torch! The roof is supported by Norman stone arches in an inner circular room. The tombs are set in the outer wall before which is a circular passageway. Recesses also contain tombs which are buried in the wall with the names and dates of the family members carved on the wall surface.

The restoration of the Mausoleum is not yet complete: pieces of dislodged stone frieze are layed aside. No information was given as to how, or when, the work will be finished. Its atmosphere was calm and not at all scary. A living memorial, albeit to the dead, of this great heritage.

The Friends walked back to the house down hill, past the lake, when the sun broke through. The pure air encouraged our vigour and appetite. We were offered a tour of the plantation after lunch or a walk through the house. Lunch was self-serve within the house, with the opportunity to walk through to the garden to sit at white iron tables among the peacocks and statuary. It was very relaxing to chat and eat in these surroundings.

I opted for walking through the house, which had been decorated with magnificent fresh floral displays for the local festival. Despite its grandeur the house feels 'lived in' with the flowers and attentive stewards enhancing your welcome. The oil paintings, long gallery and museum recalled the television series and reflected the range of interest that Castle Howard offers.

It was a superb outing of great enjoyment. We are grateful that the masterly detailed organisation made this a day to remember.

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