English Heritage backs the restoration campaign

A crucial first stage in the campaign for the restoration of Christ Church has now come to fruition. English Heritage have announced that they will give a total of £435,359 to assist the programme of restoration.

The grant, the largest ever given to help the restoration of any parish church, is due recognition of Christ Church’s enormous significance. In the statement to the press issued when the grant was announced at the beginning of February, Roland Jeffery, the Campaign Director, expressed the delight felt by the Friends. ‘The size of the grant surprised us, but Christ Church is not just important in the story of English 18th-century architecture; it is a key monument of the European Baroque of international importance. English Heritage have recognised this in the scale of their support.’ Grants are made by English Heritage for major repairs to churches listed as Grade I or II*.

Since the grant proposed for Christ Church was of exceptional size, it was therefore referred to English Heritage Commissioners. Chief Executive Jenny Page signed the offer on her last day in post; she is now heading the Millennium Commission. English Heritage officers made several visits to Christ Church in assessing the application, which was greatly assisted by the steeplejacks’ photographic survey commissioned by the Friends (and described in the previous issue of Columns). This showed the extent and nature of weathering and damage to the tower, and particularly to the steeple.

Although English Heritage have made such a considerable and generous offer, the grant is also an enormous challenge. As Roland Jeffery reminds all those interested in Christ Church’s future, ‘The government, through English Heritage, have offered 40 per cent of the costs of the structural repairs. We must find the remaining 60 per cent. The Diocese of London will help through the Stepney Area Fund. But we are looking to all the supporters of the Friends to do the rest.’
Sir James Stirling memorial

As announced in Columns 1, the west vestibule entrance doors to Christ Church will be restored to their original state in memory of the late Sir James Stirling. These works have started. Friends’ Campaign Director Roland Jeffery said, 'The works will enhance the architecture of the vestibule, and they will be completed this spring. We are grateful to everyone who helped by sending donations.'

We list below the many individuals and bodies which have given so generously to the appeal. Those whose names appear in bold type donated more than £500. Among them, the former employees of James Stirling and Michael Wilford in Germany wrote that, with their memories of him in mind, they wished to contribute 'to keep but one of the many stones intact'.

Collection at the memorial service organized by Lord Palumbo
Stirling, Wilford Architects London office
Mr Ashley Barker, Master of the Worshipful Company of Architects

29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Friends of the Offley Museum
the proceeds from the winding up of the
Hawksmoor Committee
The Richard Marriott Trust
Miss Hazel Wood’s Charitable Trust
MacCormac Jamieson Pritchard Architects

“Jim’s German colleagues”, namely:
Alexander Kolbe
Amnest Baur
Walter Nigeli
Hella Rofke
Ludger Band
Paul Panter
Mario Vattero
Siegfried Wernik

Hans Albert
Hans-Jan Debus
Hans-Georg Conrad
Jacques Thorin
Maria Roos
Pia Bruegger
Renato Valdonas
Volker Eich

Thomas Kemmermann
Bob Nier
The Warden & Fellows of All Souls’ Coll. Oxford
Mr R. Rawlinson
Revd Janice White
Mr W. McNabb
Holst-McCallum Ltd
Mr H. Wilson
Incuse Fine Art Tours
Mr D. Jeffre
South Square Trust

The Mereer’s Company
Mrs V. Chesterton
Ms W. Eccles

Mr Michael Gillingham
The Earl of Harewood
The Hon Andrew Guest
Lord Henderson
Thomas Muirhead Architects Miss J. Scott
Peter Carter Architects Mr R. Pryor
Lawrence Bain
Marlies Hentrop
Dorothy Bowe
Norbert Heyens

The Manifold Trust
Mr & Mrs R. Jeffery
Kodder Kim Associates
Brian Henderson
and a number of anonymous donors

If you wish to add a contribution to the memorial, please send your cheque to ‘The Friends of Christ Church Spitalfields’, indicating you wish it allocated to this project. The names of future donors will be recorded in Columns, and those who have given £100 or more will be invited to a supporters’ reception after the completion of the works.

Thank You

The campaign to restore Christ Church relies on gifts of time, money and talents. Recently we have had cause to thank:

• Shearman & Sterling for the photocopying of this newsletter.
• Christie’s, the auctioneers, for distributing our appeals literature to 25,000 of their customers in the UK and USA.
• Liz Baradieau, Sibylle Luig, David Press and Kenneth Usher, our hard-working volunteers in the Campaign Office.
• Trustees of the Hawksmoor Committee, who have given their closing bank balances to the Friends, upon the winding up of the Committee. (See opposite.)

Wanted

• Volunteers. We need help in the Friends’ office at Christ Church one day a week. We particularly welcome secretarial (WP) help.
• teas. We need someone to organise teas at Friends’ events.
• Postage. If your company can assist us 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. Cuttings tell us where we are attracting coverage and may be able to do so in the future. Please put the date and name of the publication in the margin if it is not on the cutting, and send it to us at the address on the foot of p4.

Please telephone the Friends’ office on 0171-247 0165 if you can help in these or any other ways.
The Friends look to Europe

Architectural heritage grants made annually by the European Union in Brussels are this year featuring 'Religious monuments', and the Friends have advanced Christ Church's strong case for grant support.

A different theme is chosen each year — last year theses which are of architectural importance were assisted. The European Commission usually receives well over 500 applications from the 15 EU member nations, and each year 40-50 sites of international importance are helped. This year the odds will be even longer since the theme is expected to solicit an unusually high number of applications. The results will be announced by the adjudicating panel of international experts in late May.

The Hawksmoor Committee, and the Hawksmoor Group

The Hawksmoor Committee was founded in 1961 with the specific aim of reviving Nicholas Hawksmoor's reputation and rekindling appreciation of his buildings. They were not at the time concerned with raising funds for his buildings, but — when admirers were small in number — they took on the task of bringing his architecture before the public eye. We reported in the last issue the death of Vaughan Davies, a pioneer Hawksmoor enthusiast, but happily other members are still very much with us. The activities of the Committee have now been wound up, and their remaining assets have generously been given to the Friends' Appeal.

Meanwhile, the new Hawksmoor Group had its first meeting in January. This group of supporters comprises senior figures in the City of London, and aims to circulate appeal details within the City. Eric Elstob, a Spitalfields resident and Friends' Treasurer, helped set the Group in motion at a reception with an address by Sir William Whitfield CBE, architect to the restoration.

Covenants and gifts

The Friends' Trustees are working to maximise the amount of statutory grant available, both from English Heritage and from Brussels, but the restoration also requires the help of countless individuals, trusts and companies. We are please to acknowledge all donations, so that donors know that their money which has been so kindly given has arrived safely. We value donations large and small; without them we will not be able to achieve our ambitious objectives.

We wish to thank the following (listed in order of receipt) who have all made generous donations using a Deed of Covenant. This enables the Friends to reclaim a free bonus from the Inland Revenue at no extra cost to the donors. If you would like a covenant form, please telephone 0171-247 0165 and speak to us or leave a message.

- Deirdre Munro
- Charles C. Wuttke
- Mr. W. S. Holkham
- Ted Williams
- Theo Clarke
- The Duke of Grafton
- Geraldine Fellows
- Carol Buckingham
- S. M. Helt
- Sir John Buddell
- Hugh Wilson
- Mrs. Lila Simon
- Miss Rosemary Smart
- Christine Raybould
- Anthony Pugh-Thompson
- Mrs. H. M. Gaddawi
- Mrs. J. M. Maclean
- Mrs. Amy Itson
- Lewis Hildreth
- Lammie Diercy
- Lord Faringdon
- Mrs. B. Agecy
- Lord Faringdon
- Mrs. V. Parkin
- Mrs. E. Robinson
- Andrew Rebein
- Elizabeth Diller
- Mrs. J. J. Doherty
- Mrs. G. Bovey
- Ellen Cross
- J. C. West
- Janet L. F. South
- Jean Supple
- Hilary Pearson
- Dr. Michael Gilmour
- David Donaldson
- Mrs. Anne Annison
- Mrs. M. Grant
- Sir Martin Wolfsohn

Burial Archaeology

The fascinating reports from the Council for British Archaeology on the excavations in Christ Church crypt are available at £2 each, or £4 for the pair, including p&p. Margaret Cox has now written a layman's version, which is likely to be available early summer at £1.50. Apply: CBA, Bowes Morrell Hse, 111 Walmsgate, York Y01 2UA.
Personal Column

Pamela Tudor-Craig, Lady Wedgwood

Each issue includes a personal appreciation of
Christ Church. We are grateful to the art
historian and critic Pamela Tudor-Craig,
whose work has commonly searched for
mysticism and hidden meaning in art and
architecture, for contributing.

Ever since Peter Ackroyd's novel
*Hawksmoor* (1985) probed the abyss
of squalor and desolation straddled by
Nicholas Hawksmoor's monumental
churches for east London, the shiver
they have always sent through the
mind has found a voice. Toppling
prodigies of over-large elements within
constricted sites, they are essentially
Baroque — S. Andrea al Quirinale or
S. Carlo alle Fontane — without the
panache of Bernini or Borromini.

It is many years since I first sat on a
straw bale in Christ Church while Peter
Burman and his companions-at-arms
fought for its restoration. I wondered
then, in an Ackroyd/Stoppard crack in
the facade of time, whether this was
1726, and that we were seeing
Hawksmoor's giant order topped by
anachronistic little arches before the
galleries had tamed their relentless
clash of scale, or whether 1866, and
the dismantling of these galleries, was
behind us. Were we at the birth or
decline of this disturbing masterpiece?

Last summer, revisiting Christ
Church for the Festival, I discovered
that time was still poised here. We sat
again on temporary seats, although
more comfortable than straw bales, for
another breathtaking work brilliantly
performed: Britten's *Prodigal Son*.
Should, I asked myself again, we
anæsthetise this brilliant and weird
church with plush and bustle, or accept
that Christ Church Spitalfields is a
design for the threshold of fear, that we
may have experienced a Piranesian
nightmare? If fair Palladian reason
does not tempt this cynical generation
to contemplation of the Four Last
Things, maybe we need the touch of
Hawksmoor terror to remind us that
there are things the canon of
materialism cannot reach.

Forthcoming Events

A Greenwich Day is planned for
Wednesday 10 May, with expert
guiding, lunch by the river and tea
in an early Georgian house on
Crooms Hill. There will be
privileged access to the Royal
Naval College, seeing parts not
normally open and including
Hawksmoor's extensive work there.
We will see Vanbrugh Castle
(outside) and English Heritage's
architectural collection at Ranger's
House, as well as Hawksmoor's Sth
Alphee. The cost will be £35 (incl.
3-course lunch, afternoon tea and
admission charges). We will begin
at Greenwich BR station at 10 am.
Book using the form enclosed.

There will be an all-day tour on a
private double-decker bus to see all
Hawksmoor's London churches
on Saturday 20 May, starting 10am.
The expert guide will be Donald
Findlay, Deputy Secretary of the
Council for the Care of Churches.
The cost (incl. bus, lunch and
donations) is £20 for Friends
subscribers, and £25 for their guests
and others. Book using the enclosed
form: places are limited.

The 1995 Spitalfields Festival is 7-
28 June. The Festival Diary and
details of priority booking are now
available. Call the Festival Hotline
on 0171-377 1362 (24 hrs).

The former public convenience near
Christ Church is the improbable
venue for an art installation 'About
Brick Lane' by Mary Anne Francis
& Siraj Izzar. Showing to 15
March: noon to 3pm

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