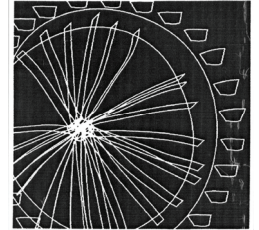


LONDON BRANCH Newsletter



October 2007

AN INCONVENIENT ROOF

London Branch Conference 2007 - *'An Inconvenient Roof? Renewable energy and the historic environment'*

With this year's annual conference the 4th to be organised by the Branch and we are now well on the way to being established as regular occurrence in the English conservation calendar. This was probably our best conference to date with delegate feedback being particularly praiseworthy in all respects.

This year we returned to the Royal College of Physicians which had previously served us well in terms of the accommodation, staffing and catering. Delegate feedback concurs with this choice, the vast majority of respondents describing the College, and the lunch it provided, as 'good - excellent'. It is always difficult to please everyone at conferences so we endeavour to select a range of experienced speakers to ensure a rounded debate from any number of viewpoints. This year delegates were again impressed by the speakers with 'good - excellent' feedback prevailing.

Low cost and high quality have been our watch words since the beginning as we strongly believe that keeping the cost low is the only way to ensure that IHBC members, especially those in local authorities, get to attend. Whilst making a profit is not our priority, this year we are pleased to announce that there will again be a modest profit.

Suggestions from delegates on future conference topics included:

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- Historic Buildings and the Building Regulations
- New and old signage in historic places
- Insurance
- Flooding
- IHBC and the Heritage Protection Review
- Historic Farmsteads
- Tall Buildings (not just in London)
- Permitted Development Rights

The conference content will be fully reported in Context in 2008. Our thanks to all the speakers and London branch members who made the day the success it was.

Sheila Stones & Nick Collins



CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

What do you think of the new IHBC logo? I rather like it. Though it may not look radically different from the old one, the new typeface and the use of colour give it a more contemporary appearance. I was fortunate enough to be invited to the official launch of the logo at Edinburgh Castle in September. The event was hosted by Historic Scotland and we were allowed into the Castle after it had closed for tourists. After being shown work in progress in building a new ticket office which will take the place of the existing portacabin on the esplanade, we had the castle to ourselves. We had the privilege of seeing the New Town and views towards Leith and the Firth of Forth, with the shores of Fife beyond in the evening sun. Edinburgh was not all play however as I attended a very interesting joint IHBC/Historic Scotland seminar on regeneration the following day.

You may not be aware of it, but the new logo was something of a London Branch project. The design was commissioned from Dale Tomlinson who does the graphics for our conference flyers. Responsibility for seeing its passage through IHBC Council was Mike Brown in his new role as Chair of The Communications and Outreach Committee. Which reminds me that London is now well represented at IHBC nationally. As well as myself we now have both Mike Brown and Sheila Stones as Vice Chair sitting on IHBC Council. Doug Black has taken on the role of Press Secretary.

My congratulations go to all those who were involved with organising our Annual London Conference. We must be building a reputation. I had a look at the delegate list and where they came from. Of a total delegate list of about 130, over 30 came from outside London and the South East. Both Scotland and Wales were represented as well as most of the regions of England. We are now thinking about topics for next year.

Finally, a date for your 2008 diaries. The Annual Heritage of London Trust meeting for EH and conservation officers will take place on 22nd May 2008. Like this year the venue will be Westminster City Hall.

David McDonald

London Branch CPD visit to Kew Gardens - Saturday 7th July

First of all, a big 'thank you' to Nicolette Duckham, Conservation Officer for Richmond, who assisted me in arranging our full day at Kew.

A chance meeting at a wedding gave us our morning's visit to Kew Palace. Harvey Murray-Smith, deputy house manager, took us round in style, entertaining us with all sorts of fascinating stories and information about the restoration, presentation and history of the building and its famous occupants. He also took us into areas not normally open to the public – the wonderfully intact attics where we saw the uncovered painted newel post and baluster and the 'witch' marks etched into the timber, and the fabulous Tudor brick undercroft, survival of an earlier Elizabethan house, possibly Robert Dudley's.

The whole palace is very atmospheric and conjures up the life and times of George III and Queen Charlotte and their many children. The Palace was also the scene of a recent royal event – the 80th birthday party for Her Majesty The Queen, hosted by Prince Charles and attended by all her family.

As Harvey pointed out, this is a modest house, once a 17th century merchant's villa beside the Thames, not the usual royal residence, so it makes for an intimate interior, one we can all appreciate – except maybe the furnishings which are an interesting exercise in clashing patterns and colours to our eyes, but, in fact, are an authentic recreation of an early 19th century interior, once seen under candlelight.

The afternoon, arranged by Nicolette, include a visit to the Marianne North Gallery and the new gallery-in-progress adjacent, followed by a visit to the top of the Pagoda, not normally open to the public. Donald Insall very kindly offered to talk to us about the Marianne North gallery and the Pagoda and Elaine



Henderson of Walters and Cohen very kindly came to talk to us about the new gallery which is under construction and how it would sit and work with the Marianne North gallery, in a different idiom but continuing to display Kew's huge botanical drawings collection; this is particularly important given the historic landscape.

Marianne North, for those of us who had never heard of her, had travelled the world in the 19th century recording what she saw in hundreds of water colours – flora, fauna, architecture, geographical wonders etc. The gallery is a little treasure and the interior with its walls filled with little pictures is made even more special by the fine detailing of its internal finishes. Donald Insall talked us through the work taking place at the gallery including refurbishment of its architectural features, problems relating to the art being fixed to the walls and the proposed resolutions. He also enlightened us about the Pagoda and joined us on our ascent to the top for the fabulous clear views of London through 360 degrees.

We ended up with a good British cuppa at the local café and thanked our lucky stars that we had had the best summer's day for several weeks! Our thanks and appreciation to Donald Insall, Elaine Henderson, Harvey Murray-Smith and Sue Runyard, PR organiser for Kew, for their contributions to a great day.

Kate Ainslie Williams



Situation Vacant

After 4 years and 4 successful London conferences Nick Collins has decided to step down from his role as Day Conference Organiser. Nick's enthusiasm and energy, ably assisted by Sheila Stones, have ensured the success of our conferences and made them truly national events as shown by the attendance of the most recent event. With the experience of organising 4 highly successful conferences a standard format and methodology has been developed and needs little alteration. Any successor will thus have an easy job!

Nicks departure means that the role of conference organiser is now vacant and presents the opportunity for an individual to take a place on the London Branch Committee. This position offers the potential for a highly rewarding role within the Branch, the opportunity to make useful contacts and as an added bonus it looks great on the CV!

If you'd like more information about the post please contact Nick for an informal chat on 020 7973 3739 or via email at nick.collins@english-heritage.org.uk.

WRONG NUMBER

BT new-style 'advert phone kiosks' fail to find favour.

'London's streets are the envy of the world'. This must be true because it says so in Baedeker's tourist guide-book *London and its Environs* of 1900. We have fine stone paving, granite kerbs and a sense of order pervading our streets, roads and squares. We have London Plane Trees (actually from Spain, but lets not split hairs). We have red telephone kiosks, designed by a real architect, and a true national treasure; stand only briefly (if you can squeeze between the number 24 and a line of black cabs) in Parliament Square and see tourists line up to take photos of one another pretending to make phone calls from the K6s outside the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, these visitors know well designed street furniture when they see it.

So it was with some alarm that we first saw BT's new payphone kiosks which bear a striking resemblance to outdoor advertising giant, J C Decaux's, 'roadside six-sheet' advertisement hoarding. Which is exactly what they are; the telephone apparatus is just attached to the rear like an afterthought.

In BT's defence they maintain that the inexorable rise of mobile phones has made old-style payphones unprofitable; yet they are still essential with 30% of calls to the charity Childline are made from public phone boxes. They also cite 'access' reasons for changing to an open kiosk. However, the 'price' we must all pay for maintaining public payphones, it seems, is a visual shouting match, instigated by large (taller and wider than the old-style kiosks), internally lit advertisements, leering over the pedestrian and blocking views along the street – the phones themselves are even too high to be comfortably used by someone in a wheelchair.

Westminster City Council, along with Kensington and Chelsea, Brent, Camden and Islington, have all resisted these garish proposals. The Planning Inspectorate have backed us – in September they dismissed J C Decaux's 7 appeals in Westminster and 11 in K&C. Thank goodness - it's hard to imagine the tourists wanting to take pictures of each other next to these 'design classics'.

Helen Ensor
Area Urban Design & Conservation Officer
Westminster City Council

THE CHINGFORD LOUVRES, THE DIOCESE AND THE PORNOGRAPHY

With the increasing expansion of the mobile telephone communications networks, operating companies continue to seek sites for their masts. Church towers offer attractive locations for such equipment and in 2002 the Archbishops Council signed a National Aerials Agreement (NAA) with telecommunications equipment installer QS4 which set up agreed processes and good practice to be followed by mobile phone companies offering mobile phone base stations to churches.

The NAA expired this year and both parties agreed that no further agreement was necessary. However, the future use of church towers and spires as locations for telecommunications equipment – and particularly that associated with the third generation (3G) network - was called into question late last year by a decision by George Pullman QC, Chancellor of Chelmsford Diocese, when he refused to grant a petition for a faculty for the installation of such equipment at the church of SS Peter and Paul in Chingford, a grade II listed church within a conservation area.

Chancellor Pullman considered three principal issues:

- The Safety Issue: The Chancellor concluded that the works proposed cause no risk to people.
- The Louvres Issue: Here the Chancellor concluded that the existing slate louvers could be removed and placed into store and that glass reinforced plastic replacement s (GRP) could be substituted.
- The Transmitted Materials Issue: In this matter the Chancellor concluded that it was wrong for the church to facilitate transmission of pornography, or to gain financial advantage thereby, however slight or modest.

On the first two issues the Chancellor found in favour of the petitioners but, crucially, on the third issue he dismissed the petition.

In February this year, the Court of Arches gave conditional permission to the applicants to appeal the decision on the transmitted material issue only. The hearing was held on 9-10 May. As the Church Times recorded on 31 August, "The Court of Arches ruled that Chancellor Pullman failed properly to evaluate such evidence as was before him and did not attempt to conduct any balancing of the arguments for and against the grant of a faculty. Therefore, the Court of Arches had considered matters afresh, and concluded that a faculty should be granted. The Court directed that a filtering mechanism for those under 18 should be required as a condition of permission being granted for the installation."

This is a clearly a significant decision which clears the way for church towers and spires to be used for mobile communications installations. However, it also has some bearing upon the aesthetic issues surrounding the use of GRP to replace original fabric as part of the installation of the telecommunications equipment. Both Chancellor Pullman and the Court of Arches considered that replacement of original fabric with GRP was acceptable despite an objection to this from English Heritage. (Curiously, the Court of Arches judgement records that English Heritage raised no objection to the original petition when in fact an objection was raised, partly on the grounds that repairs to this tower has recently been grant-aided.) It will be interesting to see if the number of such applications will now increase significantly.

Malcolm Woods

RIGHT DIRECTION

THE RESTORATION OF HARROW'S HISTORIC DIRECTION FINGERPOSTS

Earlier this year four of Harrow's historic direction fingerposts were successfully restored by Signpost Restoration Ltd, with much help from a grant from English Heritage. Each post was removed from the ground, numbered and taken to the specialist contractors' foundry. Every component was blast cleaned and painted with primer, given a base coat as well as three coats of anti corrosion paint over a 6-month period. The photographs below demonstrate the sorry state of the posts pre-restoration, and their welcome transformation:

The post (designed 1930-1933), which stands outside St John's Church in Stanmore, was broken at the base and required a new part cast.

It also received a new cast finial where this was broken at the fixing point.



The fingerpost (designed 1930-1933), which stands at the foot of Woodhall Drive, has one recast finger as it was previously broken, and the other finger has been fully restored. The restored finger was found in the Harrow Museum and was reattached.





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Both fingers of the post (designed 1930-1933), which stands at the foot of Pinner Hill Road, were recast because one was broken in 4 places and the other was broken at fixing point.

In addition, the post was broken below ground level and so a new part for this was cast.



The fingerpost (designed 1921-1930), at the foot of Peterborough Road was broken below ground level and therefore received a new cast section. Both fingers were also reconstructed.

As well as lifting and brightening up the street scene, these heritage items are of particular historic interest. Very few such posts remained after the Traffic Signs Regulations Act of 1964, which instructed each county to replace their old fingerposts with what are now the standard signs, seen throughout the country. They are therefore important references to the past, which sit well next to, or in close proximity to, the standard highway direction signs. The restored signposts have received many favourable comments and have even been included into a heritage walk by a local historical society.

Lorna Crawford
Assistant Conservation Officer,
London Borough of Harrow

A Stormy Night in Fulham

In what has become the wettest June since records began, a group of members and guests were given welcome, if brief, respite from the rain during an evening visit to Fulham Palace. The tour was ably conducted by Brian Lofthouse of Thomas Ford and Partners, the architects for the recent phase of the restoration works, accompanied by Peter Trott, of the Palace's museum. The HLF-funded project is part of a strategy to rationalise the accommodation in the Palace, improve access, and safeguard the future of the major rooms which are now open to the public, following the takeover of the building by The Fulham Palace Trust and Hammersmith and Fulham Council in 1975.



The site of the building has been the summer residence of over one hundred Bishops of London, from the beginning of the Middle Ages, although there is evidence of earlier and prehistoric settlement on the land. Once circled by the largest moat in the country, the present collection of Grade I listed buildings provides a fascinating document of interventions undertaken by successive bishops at various periods, and in diverse styles.

The tour began in the west courtyard which contains work from the 13th to 16th centuries, and comprises suites of former lodging houses leading out from the Great Hall, with its unusual gateway surmounted by a clock turret. Circling clockwise around the Palace revealed a progression of styles, from the 18th century Palladian work of Stiff Leadbetter, with later alterations by Samuel Cockrell, where classical design gave way to gothic fantasy, concluding at William Butterfield's mid 19th century polychromatic chapel with its extraordinary 1950's murals by Brian Thomas: a mixture of contemporary and classic biblical images.

The restoration of key internal spaces in this phase of the works includes the room formerly containing the library of Bishop Porteus, and the Bishop Sherlock Dining Room, a well proportioned room from which most of the detail was lost, save for what survived above a modern suspended ceiling. With the assistance of research by Dr Warwick Rodwell, it has been possible to recreate the scheme from the few shreds of evidence that remained bringing the room up to the standard of the other fine interiors in the Palace. Notable spaces include Bishop Howley's Dining Room which houses the Palace's informative museum display, and the adjoining Drawing Room, now used as a pleasant refreshment area with views across the Palace grounds.



Whilst some lingered in the bar to watch the darkening skies, others made their way to the top floor by way of a new access stair, constructed in hardwood in a modern take on the traditional elliptical stair. They were rewarded with sight of the

newly-decorated rooms in vibrant shades, the colours having been authenticated by Catherine Hassall's architectural paint research. These unique offices, away from the public areas, will provide an important source of revenue for the Palace and are a key part of the overall strategy for self-funding.

As the visit drew to a close, the rain which had abated during the earlier part of the evening reappeared like some Wagnerian leitmotiv, as a torrential downpour. Unfortunately this tested the internal gutters to capacity, dramatically sending water cascading through the ceilings below into the building – a scene that has become all too familiar in buildings old and new across the country as the summer washout continued. Such set-backs notwithstanding, the works at Fulham Palace demonstrate that an imaginative and flexible approach to using and financing important historic buildings is likely to be the key to ensuring their long-term survival.

Richard J Biggins, Gibberd Conservation

DIARY DATES

Tuesday 4th December

London Society's annual Bannister Fletcher Lecture

This year's lecture will be given by Ptolemy Dean (of BBC's *Restoration* fame) on Sir John Soane's work in London. It will be held at the Geological Society's lecture room, Burlington House, Piccadilly. For further information and tickets contact the Society at info@LondonSociety.org.uk

Thursday 6th December

HELM Workshop: Cemeteries Conservation & Management

This course will provide specialist training for local authority conservation officers ensuring they have the skills to support local authority colleagues in particular cemetery managers and volunteers. It is also applicable for cemetery managers and those working in the local authority bereavement service particularly those responsible for facilities management.

The programme shall be circulated shortly by post and e-mail when all details have been confirmed. In the meantime, please can you 'save the date' and contact me via HELMbookings@english-heritage.org.uk if you would like to make any preliminary bookings. If you yourself know that you cannot attend, please consider one of your colleagues to attend in your stead.

This is the second time this course has been run. The first was early this year in the West Midlands and proved to be very popular. There are a limited amount of places available on this workshop, so please book your place in advance to avoid disappointment.

Until - 24th Feb 08

MODA: The Suburban Landscape: 200 years of gardening

Gardening is one of Britain's most consuming passions. From gardening magazines to TV makeovers, the garden is a never-ending source of fascination. Over the last two hundred years, the nation's passion for the private suburban garden has contributed to the development of the wider public suburban landscape with which we are familiar today. This exhibition looks at the evolution of the suburban landscape as a whole, including the development of parks and open spaces, as well as the evolution of smaller "private" sphere of gardens and gardening.

www.moda.mdx.ac.uk

NEW BRANCH MEMBERS

A warm welcome to :-

Paul Crisp, RPS Consultants
Sarah Drysdale, LB Hillingdon
Meave Faulkner, LB Hackney
James Hetherington, LB Redbridge
Catherine Kidd, Alan Baxter & Associates
Lone Le Vay, LB Merton
Elizabeth Martin, LB Hackney
Elizabeth Palmer, ARUP
Dr Steven Parissien, The Prince's Foundation
for the Built Environment
Nicola Redhead, Student
Mr P A Ridley, LB Hackney
Christopher Willey, student

RECENT MOVES

Here is the latest update on London moves: —

Andrew Close has moved from LB Lambeth to LB Richmond to head the conservation team.

Claire Brady and **Breda Daly** have moved from the City to English Heritage London Region.

Alan Byrne has moved from EH London Region to SE Region.

Matthew Pendleton has moved from Westminster to English Heritage London Region.

Will Reading has moved from LB Lambeth to English Heritage London Region.

Please e-mail any changes in your details to me as soon as you can. Updated details should also be sent to -

IHBC
Jubilee House
High Street
Tisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 6HA

Thanks

Justine Page

Correction:

Gareth Jones has in fact moved from the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to DPP not the London Borough of Harrow as reported in the previous edition of the newsletter.

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Day Conference Currently Vacant

This newsletter is by IHBC members
for the IHBC London branch.

The information in its articles are the views of the authors
and not necessarily the view of the IHBC.

For the next edition please forward submissions to
mtimlin2@lambeth.gov.uk
by Friday 25th January 2008

Please send all text as Microsoft Word documents with
images as jpegs.