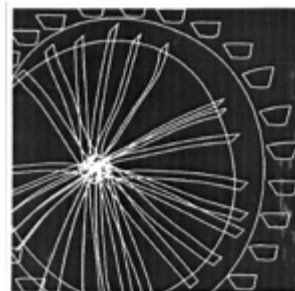




LONDON BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2012



The Inside Story: Dealing with Historic Interiors – London Branch Day Conference October 2012

We have recently finalised details of our autumn London conference, which will be held in Lasdun's grade I listed Royal College of Physicians at Regents Park.

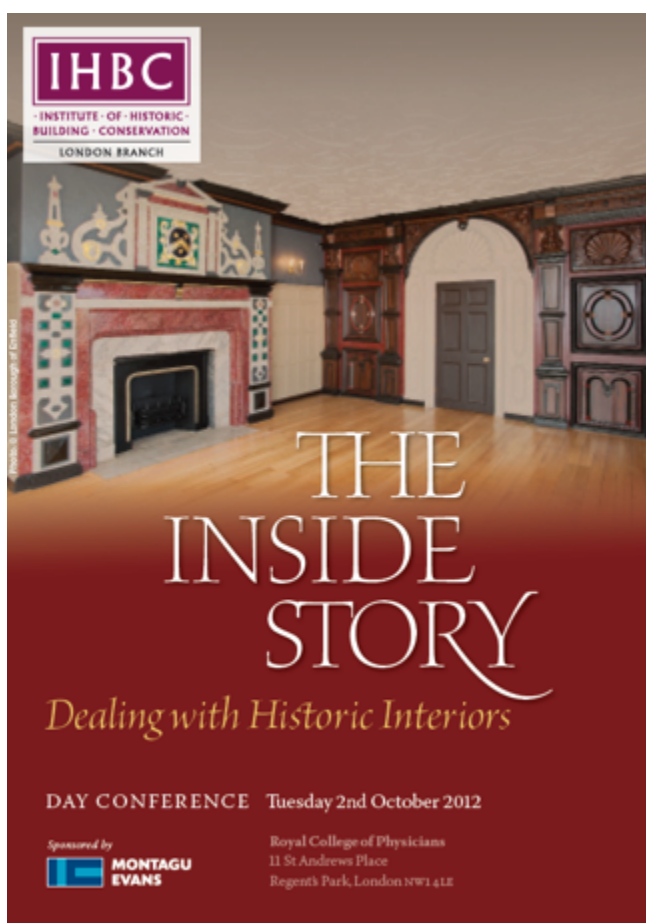
Our listed buildings are facing an unprecedented amount of pressure for change. New uses, changes in lifestyle and responses to climate change can all pose a serious threat to the often-fragile interiors of these heritage assets.

In this, the seventh of our IHBC London conferences, speakers will consider these issues by reference to their experience of buildings, which will range from high profile public projects to more modest residential dwellings.

We will have our usual range of high quality speakers, including Ptolomy Dean, Neil Burton from the Architectural History Practice as well as Allyson McDermott who wrote the fascinating article in Context about the decorative schemes at Attingham Park. There will also be technical presentations on installing services and retrofitting to improve energy efficiency. Case studies will include the St Pancras Hotel, and

also Forty Hall, by Paul Drury, both of which have been subject of IHBC London Branch visits.

Look out for details in the IHBC News blog soon!



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BUILDING · CONSERVATION

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

In my last Chairman's Note I mentioned the Government's Green Deal initiative in which householders would have the energy efficiency of their homes improved, the costs being met initially through increased bills from the utility companies. You may also have seen various rumblings in the media recently about this controversial scheme. The IHBC's concern, along with many other organisations, including the SPAB has been that the scheme would be promoting internal and external wall insulation in traditionally constructed buildings, which could have disastrous long-term structural consequences.

After many meetings with the Department of Energy and Climate Change, this message has finally sunk in and the scheme will now flag up the need for specialised assessments by appropriately skilled personnel. Having won a partial victory on this aspect of the scheme, we will be working on the potentially damaging visual consequences of wall insulation. If you are aware of any particularly bad examples of external wall insulation please send me the details. If you want to know more about Green Deal and its implications, do read the excellent article by John Preston in the latest edition of Context.

The other IHBC issue which I have been involved in since my retirement has been the campaign against the removal of VAT exemption for alterations and improvements to listed buildings. This issue has been well covered in the IHBC NewsBlog. You may also have seen a recent open letter to George Osborne in the Times, to which the IHBC was a signatory. At the time of writing, the campaign is still continuing, but there is no sign yet of a government U-turn. Whether or not this battle is won, what has impressed me has been the way in which many heritage organisations have come together to mount an effective campaign. Heritage Alliance and the Federation of Master Builders have been particularly active in leading the charge. I hope that we will be able to mobilise as effectively in future campaigns.

Those of you who attended our Branch AGM in May will be aware that John Webb will be taking over as our London representative on IHBC Council. I shall be continuing as Branch Chairman, but taking on a less active role than previously. The reason for this is that I was elected as the IHBC's Education Secretary at the AGM, which took place at the recent Annual School in Winchester. This is major and quite daunting job to take on, but I feel ready for the challenge. One of my first tasks will be to ask IHBC members for their views on what should be the Institute's educational priorities over the next few years. Look out for emails and articles in Context!

Finally, it occurs to me that nationally, we must be the best-represented branch on IHBC Council. Not only will we have John Webb as London Branch Representative, but Sheila Stones as Vice Chair, Mike Brown as Policy Secretary and me as Education Secretary. We will all do our bit to make sure that London's voice is heard nationally.

David McDonald
London Branch Chairman

IHBC London Branch Site Visit – Forty Hall

IHBC London members attended a fascinating guided tour of the recently restored Forty Hall in Enfield on 11th July, led by Enfield's Heritage Czar, Mike Brown who played a key role in the refurbishment of this magnificent Grade I listed 17th Century mansion built in the 1630s for Sir Nicholas Raynton, an Alderman, Sheriff and Lord Mayor of London and also Master of the Haberdashers Company.



Enfield Council has just completed a commendable restoration of this classical house and members were shown some very fine interiors where intricate plasterwork, oak panelling, and grand fireplaces have been returned to their original splendour.

The Council have owned the mansion since the 1950s and after years of its decline, finally invested raised £4.3 million together with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of nearly £2 million to fund its restoration.

The IHBC party was shown the sensitive adaptations including the installation of a Jacobean style staircase in its original configuration replacing a Victorian one which was a far less sympathetic addition, the discrete insertion of a lift to provide universal access to all three floors, the refurbishment of the impressive Long Gallery and the reinstatement of the central courtyard under a glazed roof creating an attractive exhibition space. The group also admired the original paint schemes from the 1630s, long covered over by successive new layers of various hues.

In true IHBC tradition, after such enjoying such architectural delights, we repaired to a local hostelry, The Cricketers to wet our whistles and sample good pub grub.

Edmund Bird

The London List 2011

The National Heritage List for England – the great compendium of all our nationally designated historic buildings, monuments, landscapes, wrecks and battlefields – now stands at over 400,000 entries, and it keeps growing. Nearly 1,000 entries were added or amended in the course of last year, while this year's total is already at 400 and rising. It's hard keeping track of it all – which is why, for the last couple of years, we in the designation department at English Heritage have been publishing the London List: a fully illustrated guide to all the sites and structures designated within the capital over the preceding twelve months. It takes a while to put together, but the 2011 edition is now almost ready to hit the shelves.

Available as a PDF and (funds permitting) as a printed booklet, the 2011 London List gives details of more than 70 new and upgraded designations across the Greater London boroughs. The total rises to over 150 if you count all the individual tombs listed in the great cemeteries of Bunhill, Brompton and Highgate – all resurveyed during 2011.

Perhaps the highlight of the year was the listing of Richard Rogers' Lloyd's Building at Grade I, exactly 30 years after construction began in 1982; other big-name modern architects on the list include Denys Lasdun, whose Philips Building at SOAS in Bloomsbury (1970-3) went straight in at Grade II*; Lubetkin and Tecton at the Hallfield Estate in Bayswater (1947-55); and Stirling and Gowan at the remarkable Brunswick Park Primary School in Camberwell (1961-2).



Charles Holden, doyen of inter-war design on the London Underground, also had a good year: his famous London Transport HQ building at 55 Broadway in Westminster (1927-9), with its gallery of sculptures by Epstein, Moore, Gill and others, has been upgraded from Grade II to Grade I, and a number of his stations have been upgraded or newly listed alongside others by architects such as Leslie Green, Stanley Heaps and Brian Lewis.



Much older and humbler buildings also figure prominently, from the former Strand Union Workhouse in Fitzrovia (1773 and later), whose notorious overcrowding and squalor were viciously satirised by Dickens, to Tough's boathouse in Teddington (1862), where the 'Little Ships' of the upper Thames mustered in May 1940 before making the journey to Dunkirk.

Perhaps the greatest curiosity of all is Repository Woods in Woolwich, laid out from 1804 onwards to serve the apparently contradictory functions of artillery practice ground and pleasure garden; its landscape of pools, rides and carefully contrived obstacles has now been added to the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

David Garrard
English Heritage

All photos courtesy of English Heritage

Joint HOLT/EH/IHBC Meeting

The main event this spring for the branch has been the annual meeting for London conservation officers held jointly with the Heritage of London Trust and English Heritage. As in previous years, the May meeting was held at Westminster City Hall. Lunch was taken in the seventeenth floor Civic Suite, courtesy of the City Council. This enabled delegates to get a bird's eye view of the preparations for the Jubilee celebrations at the front of Buckingham Palace.

The keynote speaker was John Howell MP, PPS to Greg Clark and driving force behind the NPPF. He acknowledged what he described the mature response of many in the sector to the draft document and hoped that we would appreciate the changes which had been made to improve the definition of sustainability. He considered that the final NPPF gave sufficient weight to heritage issues. He was cautiously welcoming to prospective new guidance from English Heritage and others.

Otherwise, the main theme of the day was places of worship, and a number of topical subjects were covered. Peter Aiers of the Churches Conservation Trust gave us an entertaining talk on community involvement in the re-use of churches. This was followed by three presentations by the Diocese of London. Edmund Harris, formerly of SAVE, dealt with Places at Worship at risk. Matt Cooper provided useful advice on dealing with metal theft, and Geoffrey Hunter brought us down to earth by reminding us of the pitfalls of dealing with the Ecclesiastical Exemption.

Finally, away from the churches theme, there were useful presentations by Sue Bowers on the future HLF Strategy, and James Moir on the work of UK Preservation Trusts. London Branch member, Christine White provided a fascinating account of statuary and sculpture at risk. You can read about it in detail in her article in the recent edition of Context.

David McDonald

Change, always change...

Important changes to heritage protection have been announced in the *Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill* 2012-13, which, was published on 23 May 2012.

Many of the provisions are similar to those included within the aborted Heritage Protection Bill and include:

- The merging of conservation area consent and planning permission;
- Removing the need for applications for COILs to be accompanied by a planning application;
- Providing the legal basis for list descriptions to identify elements of the building which are not of special interest or do not form part of the listed building; and
- Allow for the establishment of Heritage Protection Agreements.

Marc Timlin

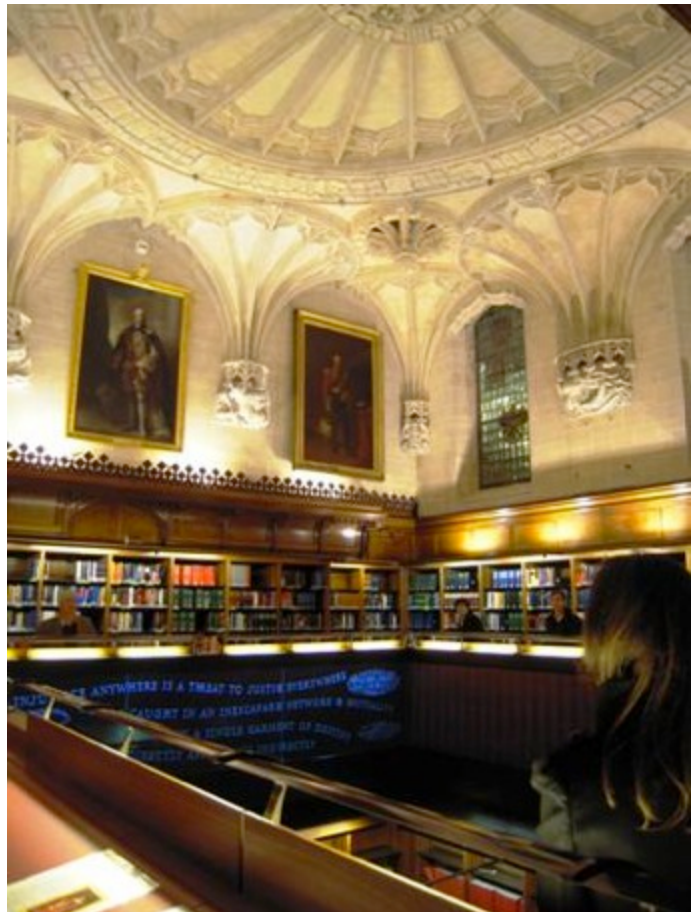
IHBC London Branch Visit – The Supreme Court

According to Kate Ainslie Williams, London Branch's events' organiser, the visit to the Supreme Court was booked-up faster than any previous event. Within a couple of hours of being advertised on our Yahoo Group email, all the places were taken.

Those of us fortunate enough to turn up early on a very cold February evening were treated to a bit of a media scrum, as photographers jostled to get a good shot of Wikileaks's Julian Assange leaving the building with his legal advisers.

That excitement over, we patiently queued in the lobby to go through airport-like security before entering the main part of the building. In itself, this demonstrated some of the challenges faced by architect Hugh Feilden, Partner at Feilden and Mawson in adapting and modernising the building for its new use.

This impressive Portland stone building was built in 1906-13 by the Scottish architect James S Gibson with Skipworth and Gordon, in a style that has been described as neo- Gothic with Flemish-Burgundian influences. Formerly Middlesex Guildhall, it is one of a group of Edwardian public buildings which face Parliament Square. It was converted to a Crown Court in the 1970s with further alterations taking place in the 1990s.



Whilst the previous use as a court and the extent of previous alterations allowed some flexibility in its re-use, it was explained that a considerable degree of adaptation was still required because of the unique way in which the Supreme Court operates. In the main witnesses or defendants do not attend it. As the ultimate court of appeal, the main participants are the Law Lords themselves as well as legions of solicitors and barristers. As Hugh explained, there were real challenges in making effective use of the rooms available for re-use and providing access for all. It was with some irony that he noted that the listed building application itself had been subject of Judicial Review instigated by SAVE.

The entrance hall was remodelled to take account of the new security arrangements mentioned earlier, but space was found to display the Middlesex Regiment's memorial plaque to those who fell in two World Wars. Careful installation of an opening glazed screen maintained security, but allows a central processional entrance for the Lords. We

were shown around two of the main courts, which had been carefully re-planned to accommodate the new use, including the discrete insertion of new services. An important element was the necessary equipment to allow live TV coverage of important cases, which could be relayed to other rooms in the building when the court was full.



In some areas, the use of some quite heavy-duty secondary glazing was apparent. This unfortunately intrusive feature was necessary, for both sound reduction and because of potential security threats. In contrast, the glazing over of a light well within the building, not only created additional useable space, but also

avoided the need for additional protection for some valuable stained glass windows. In a building such as this, the provision of disabled access is always going to be a challenge. As well as ramps in the entrance hall, stairs, which fold back to provide a platform lift, had been installed to gain access to one of the main public areas of the building.

There was disappointment about the quality of some of the interior fittings, including the lights, but these elements had not been under the supervising architect's control. In contrast, the project was enlivened by some imaginative use of public art, including a rather bold carpet design by the artist Peter Blake.

Overall, we were very impressed by the quality of the work which had been carried out to convert the building to its new use. And for those of you who were unable to come along to the visit, the building is open to the public to observe the court when it is in session. www.supremecourt.gov.uk

David McDonald



NEW BRANCH MEMBERS

A warm welcome to :-

Chris Bowers – MRDA
Katherine Falconer Hall – CgMS
Anna Foresheaw
Annabel Green -Westminster CC
Sibylle Heil - WPD Productions
Eleanor Lakew - LB Ealing
Grant Lock - Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners
Andrew Rayner - LB Islington
Tanya Szendeffy - Queen Mary University
David Taylor - Montagu Evans LLP
Viorica Feler-Morgan
Sarah Khan - Roger Mears Architects
Alison Baisden - Turley Associates
Renato Messere - Three Rivers DC
Thomas Pearson - Ove Arup & Partners

Stop Press!

After many years of successfully organising events for the London Branch Kate Ainslie-Williams has stepped down from her role as Events Co-Ordinator.

Christine White, Heritage Officer at Enfield Council, has kindly agreed to take on this role.

We wish to thank Kate for all her hard work and for organising some truly memorable visits for the Branch.

Christine will be in contact with the Branch to confirm the next visits over the coming months.

Please e-mail any changes in your details to me as soon as you can.

Updated details should also be sent to -

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SP3 6HA

Thanks

Jacinta Fisher

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Day Conference: Position 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.

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